Week ending May 26 1956
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Two brilliant short stories complete in this issue

THIRTY-FIVE MINUTES
by N. J. Crisp

WITCHCRAFT IN THE LIBRARY
by William Brandon

ZANZABUKU: I meet the jungle's comedians, by LEWIS COTLOW

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TEMPLE BAR 2468 MAY 26 1956 VOLUME 99 NUMBER 2604

IN THIS ISSUE

Stories

THIRTY-FIVE MINUTES *by N. J. Crisp* 7
WITCHCRAFT IN THE LIBRARY *by William Brandon* 12

Articles

BARNEY COLEHAN, MAYOR OF TOP TOWN *by John Ennis* 10
BATTLE IN THE FLAMES *by Rex Grizell* 16
FURNISHING WITH A FORTUNE *by John Harman* 22
ANY COMPLAINTS ON THE SEVEN-THIRTY? *by Keith Ellis* 27

Serials

ZANZABUKU (Part 4) *by Lewis Cotlow* 19
THE SILENT PARTNER (Part 5) *by Winston Graham* 24

Features

FREE SPEECH: 4. THE COVER: 4. YOUTH: 29, 35, 36, 39, 43. YOUR GARDEN AND MINE: 36. SPOT THE LAWBREAKER: 43. OPEN TO VIEW: 46.

REPORT FROM THE EDITOR

N. J. Crisp with his wife in their Southampton garden

In Germany for R.A.F. reserve training last summer, N. J. Crisp flew in a Vampire jet fighter on a thirty-five minute low-level flight. At his home in Southampton a few weeks later, Crisp's nine-year-old son Robert fell off a slide, broke both his wrists and received slight concussion. "The two events," says Crisp, "provided my fourth story for JOHN BULL." It begins on page 7.

Norman James Crisp is a spare-time writer—his job is area manager for a pest control firm. Thirty-two and married, he has two children "and there's another due in August."

He started writing eighteen months ago. "I'd always wanted to write, and I woke up one morning and realized that I had done nothing about it." He writes a thousand words in two or three hours. "If my stories sell I'm satisfied with them." Crisp's intimate knowledge of flying comes from his wartime training as a pilot. He has flown Chipmunks and Austers as a member of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force and is auxiliary adjutant of No. 662 Air Observation Post Squadron.

Crisp joined the R.A.F. in 1943, learned to fly in the U.S.A. and came home to find that there were too many pilots chasing too few aircraft. He transferred to glider flying—and came nearest to having the sort of accident he describes in his story.

"It was a night solo in a light glider," he says. "I cast off from the towing aircraft at a thousand feet and couldn't see a thing." Just when he had resigned himself to hitting a tree he spotted a light that denoted the landing area. "It was a very close shave."

BEN OSTRICK also has two small children, and was just the artist to illustrate Crisp's story. "I knew exactly how everyone in it must feel," he says, "because recently my two-year-old son Jolyon fell downstairs. Fortunately all he suffered was a nasty bruise on the forehead."

Ostrick was six when he decided that he wanted to be an artist. Now, at forty, he comments, "I haven't yet achieved my ambition of being a portrait painter, but I still hope to."

His first job was in an art studio where he swept the floor, cleaned paint brushes and did other jobs for 4s. 2d. a week, and for two years he was out of work. Despite his success now, Ostrick is still a worrier, a nerve-torn perfectionist. Everything must be exact; he must have his cup of coffee; his cigarettes—"about thirty a day"—must be by his side. "Then comes the problem of beginning. That is always the most difficult. The whiteness of the board frightens me—it always does."

So he turns on the radio for music, or plays records, preferably Beethoven's Second or Fourth Symphonies. All the time he paints he must have music. "I can't work without it. Of course, I don't *hear* it. But if it stops I can hear the silence."

There's something better to eat in

Summer County

Spring comes to Hendle's Bridge

Tradition in Summer County says you'll meet your true-love on Hendle's Bridge. Seems tradition's coming true. A shy silence—a few words—and the Bridge lives up to its reputation. She'll help the Bridge out, of course. She'll take him back for tea. Their mothers are old friends, so it'll be just like home to him. That'll mean Summer County Margarine on the table. Both mothers know there's butter in Summer County . . .

You'll love the butter in Summer County Margarine

Who said falling in love makes you lose your appetite? Try Summer County Margarine. Relish the butter in it. You'll love it—and you won't lose your appetite. Anything but. Ask country folk. *They* love Summer County. You'll find it in countless country store-cupboards, country-fresh companion to the good food farming folk grow for themselves.

You'll find it in your local shop, too. Summer County Margarine, with butter in it . . .

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Free Speech

- **How to deal with children**
- **A world at the surgery door**
- **Vintage year for savings**

As the overseas representative of an engineering firm, I have had the opportunity to study family life in many parts of the world.

In France I was once invited to dinner by a client, and was impressed by the perfect manners and complete lack of shyness of his four young children. But I deplored their enthusiasm for wines and liqueurs, and was shocked when one took an after-dinner smoke.

In Berlin, on a similar occasion, the children were stiffly polite and too frightened to say a word, but in America my stay with friends was ruined by three riotous boys whose parents did not believe in telling them to behave.

Only in Britain have I been able to play with children. But when I mentioned this to an Italian friend, he said: "That's the trouble with you English—you either treat your children as pets, or your pets as children." —B. K. S., Birmingham.

Top Secret

Recently, during a ceremony at the boys' naval training establishment at Shotley, Suffolk, a sixteen-year-old boy helping to man the rigging stood on an 18-in. "button" atop a mast 140 ft. above the ground. I realize that he volunteered, but I wonder at the navy allowing him to do so. — T. F., Lincoln.

"A safety net is provided, and the mast's lightning conductor can be gripped with the knees," says the Admiralty. "Manning the rigging is a part of training and is no more dangerous than climbing the mast of a ship."

Shedding The Burden

The new valuations have caused great activity in my neighbourhood. Several householders are sawing three or four

feet off their garden sheds to stop them being classified as garages and thus qualifying for a higher valuation.—P. D. W., Bromley, Kent.

"Assessments are made on the basis of what rental a property would be expected to fetch at 1939 values," says the Inland Revenue. "A large shed, with doors opening on to a runway, and which could be let as a garage, would be assessed as one."

Officers Only

It is unfortunate that, eleven years after the war, it is still thought necessary in war pensioners' hospitals to segregate those who were officers and those who were not.

I was recently in Queen Mary's Hospital, Roehampton, where ex-officers not only have a special ward, but a separate dining-room and recreation room.

I have no objection to privileges for officers in wartime, but it is difficult to support them in civil life.—L. A. P., Kent.

"In war pensioners' hospitals generally, officers eat in their wards and other ranks in the main dining hall," says the Health Ministry. "Basically, however, there are no differences—treatment is the same and the food is the same."

Eye For Fashion

To be fashionable nowadays, it seems that sun-glasses should be worn whenever possible; but I have heard it said that there is no need for sun-glasses in Britain, as the sun is not strong enough to harm the eyes. They should be worn only in a continual glare, and then the lenses should be prescribed for particular sight.—F. L. GIBBONS, Doyle Road, Guernsey.

"Wearing sun-glasses is certainly overdone," says an optician. "I've even seen them worn on underground trains. But they are useful where there is glare. A person who wears spectacles should not discard them, but should wear sun-glasses at the same time. Normally there is no need to have sun-glasses specially prescribed."

New Line

Telephone call boxes, we are told, are to be equipped so that trunk calls can be paid for, and the number dialled, without guidance from the operator. Perhaps the apparatus could dispense with buttons A and B, too, as they do in Leichtenstein, where, in the case of no reply, the money is returned on replacing the receiver.—MRS. E. M. R., Derby.

"We are designing a new coin box which we hope will do away with the buttons," says the Post Office. "The design is not yet settled, but in any case it would be three to four years before the box could be introduced."

Emergency Call

Any doctors that Britain cannot employ in the future ("Free Speech," April 28) would find ample use for their talents in other countries.

In Britain there is one doctor to roughly nine hundred people, but in Northern Rhodesia there is only one to every 13,000, and elsewhere the position is worse.

In under-developed areas, which comprise two-thirds of the world's population, the average annual income is less than a tenth of that of people in Britain. And life-expectancy at birth is thirty years, compared with about sixty-five years here. — P. J. MATHER, Tollington Park, London, N.4.

"The world needs twice as many doctors as it has," says the United Nations. "There are nine hundred thousand doctors in the world, but they predominate in 'advanced' countries."

Driving Space

The provision of sufficient roads to carry the greatly increased traffic is urgent, we are told. Yet in a few minutes on a crowded London main road I recently saw about a hundred and fifty cars pass by—and of these only eleven conveyed people other than the drivers.—A. H. GRANT, London, S.W.12.

"In the rush hour, a private car carries an average of one and a half people, including the driver, while a double-decker bus carries more than sixty," says London Transport. "As a bus is two and a half times as long as a car, it is sixteen times more efficient for road space per passenger."

Savings Spurt

In a recent week, National Savings went down by £248,000, although they rose by £500,000 the previous week. At this rate, it would take five hundred years to build the savings total up to the present figure of more than £6,000 million. I wonder when the bulk of this sum was deposited.—R. FLORANCE, Plymouth, Devon.

"At the outbreak of the second World War, small savings in National Savings certificates, defence bonds and savings banks stood at £1,500 million," says a National Savings official. "But this was driven up to £5,100 million by 1945.

"The best postwar year for savings was 1954-55. The past year has not been so good, because of the credit squeeze."

John Bull pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the John Bull Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post

THE COVER

WITH enough boxes and rustling tissue for a birthday, and gadgets and attentive grown-ups, a shoe shop has the trappings of a children's wonderland. And all this for feet! At our cover girl's age they're off the ground most of the time anyway —and ankle-deep in mischief. But it looks as though Laurent's young lady can't quite see into that box of tricks—which is just as well. She might start buying shoes that fit, and then what fun would it be to be feminine? Still, she has a little time yet before comfort and elegance part company at her feet.

If you can brush after meals, that's best—if not, here's

NEWS! A toothpaste for people who can't brush after every meal-

Refreshment Car, Cornish Riviera Express

JUST ONE BRUSHING removes most bacteria—major cause of decay and mouth odour

Can't brush after every meal? Then new Gleem toothpaste is specially *made* for busy people like you. *Just one brushing* with Gleem removes most bacteria — major cause of tooth decay and mouth odour. That's because Gleem has the exclusive ingredient GL-70*, an important new decay-fighter. Gleem with GL-70 *gets at the cause of decay.*

Mouth fresher. Brushing with Gleem combats unpleasant mouth odours, makes the mouth feel fresh, clean, and healthy. A Gleem brushing is the perfect start to every day.

A winner with the family. New breezy-tasting Gleem encourages children to brush often and take proper care of their teeth. To reduce decay, see your dentist at least twice a year — and brush regularly with Gleem.

* *GL-70 is a blend of anionic sulphates exclusive to Gleem. Active ingredient: 0.37% Sodium Lauryl Sulphate and 0.75% Sodium Monoglyceride Lauryl Sulphate.*

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HERE'S THE PROOF

Photomicrographs show mouth bacteria enlarged 1,000 times.

Germs breeding on tooth surfaces are a chief cause of decay and mouth odour.

After one GLEEM brushing. See how the action of GL-70 has removed nearly all the germs.

A HEDLEY PRODUCT
In two big-value sizes: medium 1/10d large 2/7d

ONLY NEW GLEEM HAS GL-70 . . . important new decay and bacteria fighter

A film star? Never. A soldier? Once.
An explorer? In a manner of speaking . . .
An artist? Certainly! . . .
and a most designing individual.
What's more, a man with a reputation
for understanding the good things of life.
Let's have a word with him.

Sir! Will you join us in a small glass of something?

Why, thank you. I will. Not too small, if you don't mind . . . and not too strong.

A dry Martini?

This morning I feel more inclined to a straight vermouth—shall we say a Martini Dry. And I'll take it, if I may, in a large glass. You can't appreciate a first-rate vermouth in thimblefuls.

That's an interesting answer.
We'll have the same. Nothing with it?

Coldness—a good barman provides that free! And an olive by all means. The colour of an olive tones well with the Martini. The flavour of an olive doesn't quarrel with the subtleties in the glass. Settings are important. I wouldn't, for instance, drink even a Martini from a chipped china mug.

But, china mugs apart . . . ?

There's no better drink in the wide world than Martini, dry or sweet. You can quote Hardy Amies on that.

Better drink

MARTINI

Sweet or Dry

He was ready now to pass judgment on Elizabeth's tragic mistake. A brush with death gave him the answer in . . .

Thirty-five Minutes

by N. J. CRISP

ILLUSTRATED BY OSTRICK

FLYING OFFICER HARDING hoisted his parachute over his shoulder and walked across the tarmac. The screech of jet engines had died for the day, and the Vampires stood silent and immobile. He was trying to feel unconcerned and not succeeding very well.

He went into the hangar, mounted the stairs at one side, and put down his parachute. He held his hands in front of him, and studied them. The tremor was slight, but definite.

The door of the flight commander's office was open, and Johnny went in. "That Meatbox made a big hole in the ground," he said. He looked at the expressionless face in front of him. "Did he buy it?"

Flight Lieutenant Moss said: "He bailed out. He's all right."

Johnny let out a long breath of relief. "I saw it on the way back. Dreadful mess. Only about half a mile from my place. I thought he'd gone straight in."

"He waited until he was clear of the village. Then he bailed out."

"Good for him."

There was no one about. The crew room was empty. Johnny said: "All right if I push off?"

Moss said: "Just a minute, Johnny. Sit down."

Johnny sat down. He wondered what he had done wrong.

"I've been waiting for you," Moss said. "I thought it best not to call you on the radio."

"What's the trouble?"

"There was a phone call from your wife. Only a few minutes ago."

"Elizabeth?"

"Yes."

Elizabeth never phoned him at the airfield.

"Now try and take it easy," Moss said. "There's been an accident and she wants you to go home right away. It's your little boy."

Johnny slowly lit a cigarette, refusing to yield to his inward surge of panic. Christopher was an eighteen-month-old bundle of curiosity, but nothing much could have happened to him. Elizabeth would see to that.

He drew on his cigarette before speaking. "He's a regular young monkey," he said casually. "Always climbing things. Our house is

"Isn't it silly?" she sobbed. "I didn't cry at all when it happened." Johnny studied the wallpaper, and tried to think of the proper words

"Everyone does stupid things sometimes," Elizabeth said. But this was different—this might kill their son . . .

an absolute obstacle course. Gates and barricades. Have to keep them shut or he'd be up on the roof. I expect he fell out of his high chair."

"I don't know quite what it is, Johnny, but I'm afraid it's more than that. He's been taken to hospital." Moss slid a small key across the desk. "You'd better borrow my car and get on home. Don't bother to come in tomorrow."

"Thanks."

Once outside the office, Johnny allowed his fear to surface, and he drove recklessly to the small cottage they rented. Elizabeth was sitting, still and white, gazing out of the window. She jumped up and ran out to meet him. She said: "Thank heaven you've come."

"How is he?"

She made a curious, involuntary gesture. "I phoned just now. He's still unconscious."

"Unconscious!" Johnny was startled. "I thought he'd cut himself or something." He went on, almost roughly: "You'd better tell me what happened."

"Yes," she said. She hadn't been crying, and her eyes were flat and shocked. "It was this afternoon. I was upstairs cleaning the windows. I'd put a chair beside the landing window so that I could reach it. Christopher was down in the hall playing with his bricks. The gate at the bottom of the stairs was shut."

She wasn't looking at him. "I've always been careful about that, Johnny, since you put it up."

Johnny nodded. He remembered the fright they'd had when Christopher first scrambled up the stairs when no one was watching him, and fell most of the way down again. He hadn't hurt himself, but the next day Johnny had rigged up a little gate between the wall and the banister.

"Suddenly," Elizabeth said, "there was a dreadful screaming noise, and a plane went over the house very low. A few seconds later there was an explosion."

She stopped speaking, and Johnny forced himself to wait for her to go on.

"My heart seemed to stop," she said. "I was afraid it was you, Johnny. I'm always afraid it's you."

Johnny saw that her hands were twisted tight together.

He said: "It was a Meteor. The pilot bailed out."

"Yes. I didn't know. I just forgot everything. I ran downstairs and out of the back door. There was a horrible cloud of black smoke over by the wood. Some men were running across the field and I started to run too. I ran for what seemed to be a long time, and then I met a man coming the other way. I said: "Was it a Vampire?" and he said: 'No, missus. It was a Meteor, but there was no one in it.' Then I knew I'd been silly, and I thought about Christopher."

The fear of that moment reflected on her face as she went on: "I hurried back indoors, but when I got there he wasn't in the hall. I looked up. He was on the window-sill of the landing window. He heard me, turned round, and overbalanced. I tried to catch him, but I couldn't."

Johnny put his arms round her, and pulled her head on to his shoulder.

"Go on," he said.

"He fell all the way to the bottom of the stairs. I knew he was badly hurt. He didn't move, and his face was white. He . . . he was all crumpled up like a broken little doll."

At last the tears came, but not in a good way. Johnny could feel her body shaking in taut jerks like an overstrung wire. Automatically he stroked her hair. "Take it easy now," he said gently.

"I'm sorry. Isn't it silly?—I didn't cry at all. when it happened. I phoned the hospital, and then I tried to stop the bleeding. Blood was oozing all through his hair."

Christopher had his mother's delicate hair. The thought of it matted and caked with blood made Johnny suddenly feel sick.

"The ambulance was very quick," she said. "Not more than a few minutes. They took him away. The doctor said I ought to wait for you."

Johnny studied the wallpaper, and tried to think of the proper words. He said slowly: "How did he get upstairs?"

Elizabeth rubbed her face tiredly, and said: "Give me a cigarette." In silence, he flicked his lighter and held it out. Elizabeth lit the cigarette. "When I went out," she said, "I left the gate open at the bottom of the stairs."

"I see." Johnny wished he could let it go at that. He said: "But the window-sill? That's much too high for him."

In Elizabeth's white face, two spots of red began to burn.

"Oh, that's easy," she said. "I left the chair alongside the window. I've been thinking about that too, so do you know what I did to take my mind off it, while I was waiting for you?" Her voice was high now, much too high. "I cleaned the blood up off the stairs. It's quite safe to go up. You won't see anything. I scrubbed it."

That way lay hysteria, or worse. "Stop it!" said Johnny loudly. "Stop it!"

The blank look that had come into her eyes faded, and she blinked. Johnny led her gently upstairs, and made her lie down on the bed. He went to the kitchen, made a hot drink and added some whisky.

When he went back upstairs, she raised herself on one elbow and said anxiously: "Have you phoned the hospital?"

"In a minute. Drink this first." He made her drain the glass, and watched her colour return to something approaching normal.

"I'm sorry," she said. "I don't know what made me act so stupidly."

"It's not surprising. After such a terrible business, and you all alone."

"I'm sorry, Johnny," she said, in a low intent voice.

He pulled the bedclothes over her. "Try and get some sleep." Poor girl, he thought, that's what she needs.

He went down to the kitchen, and mechanically began to tidy up. He didn't want to phone the hospital yet. If he didn't phone, he couldn't learn anything worse about Christopher.

He was aware also, that he was circling round his main thoughts, not daring to delve too deep. The longer it could be put off the better. Yet in his mind a judgment was already waiting to be formed.

He decided to review the facts dispassionately. Elizabeth had run outside, leaving the safety gate at the bottom of the stairs open. Christopher had crawled up the stairs and climbed on to the window-sill. How had he got on to the window-sill? Elizabeth had left a chair conveniently handy.

Oh, blast it! Viciously, Johnny grabbed the telephone. . . .

He telephoned the hospital at intervals during the night, but there was no change in Christopher's condition.

It was just after dawn when Elizabeth came down. She looked rested but not refreshed, and her face was sad. She made breakfast, and they ate in silence.

At last she said: "I've been awake for a long time, thinking."

"You mustn't worry."

"What are you going to do?"

Johnny had already decided that he must get out of the house at all costs. He said: "I——I thought I'd go and fly. You could always get hold of me if there was any change."

Elizabeth toyed with her cup, watching the movement of the liquid. She said in a flat voice: "I thought perhaps you wouldn't have to fly today. I thought you might be able to stay with me."

"It would be better if I went." Johnny shrugged into his tunic, and pulled on his cap.

At the door, he turned. Elizabeth was still sitting bowed over the table. Without looking up, she said: "You think it was my fault, don't you, Johnny?"

"No . . . it's just that. . . ."

"Well, it was."

Johnny stared at her as, abruptly, she stood up, deliberately holding herself erect. When she faced him, her eyes were bright. She said: "I failed in my duty. That's what you call it in the Service, isn't it? All right. I know that." Her voice sank to a whisper. "But don't condemn me, Johnny. Please."

He wanted to take her in his arms and console her and yet he stood there, as if paralysed, unable to move. He knew that he had condemned her, in part at least.

Elizabeth said pleadingly: "Don't you think I've been all over it, dozens and dozens of times? You couldn't say worse things to me than I've said to myself. But I'm only a human being, Johnny. Everyone does wrong and stupid things sometimes. I just couldn't bear it if you were to —to think differently of me because of it."

Johnny said: "I understand. But . . . I'm sorry . . . I must go."

She seemed to crumple in front of him as, hurriedly, he shut the door. . . .

Moss was surprised to see him. He said: "You shouldn't have come."

Johnny said: "If I don't fly or do something, I shall go round the bend. Can you give me an aeroplane?"

"You can go on the low-level cross-country if you like. But do you really want to? You don't look as if you slept much."

"I'm all right." He could see that Moss was feeling awkward, not liking to ask the question, and said, in a neutral voice: "The boy is still unconscious. There's no change."

"He'll come through."

Yes, there was a chance. But the doctor had been rather noncommittal. Concussion was such a harmless-sounding word, but a period of unconsciousness was always a sign of danger. There might be some damage, irreparable damage.

He blinked back the sudden, unsought tears, and tried to thrust the thought from his mind. Then there was Elizabeth. What was he doing to Elizabeth?

He turned and went out to the briefing-room. There at least he would find a few minutes respite, a few minutes to grapple with himself and achieve some sort of control.

The familiar scene appeared most unfamiliar this morning. The assembled pilots, his friends, were awkward and withdrawn, mumbling condolences, disliking themselves for not being able to share his pain.

A few minutes later Moss stood in front of the blackboard, a piece of chalk in his fingers. He

It was the hospital on the phone. Johnny went suddenly cold as he heard the voice ask: "Can you come over right away?"

said: "Right, chaps, you've all done this exercise before, but I'll run through it briefly again. . . ."

Johnny heard little of the briefing. The words seemed to come and go, and only a few disconnected phrases emerged . . . "Fly at one hundred feet . . . rendezvous at the second turning point . . . dummy attack." Then it was over, chairs were squeaking, and the pilots filing out.

"Johnny," Moss called. "Just a minute." Johnny waited by the door and Moss came over and said: "Are you sure you want to fly? Wouldn't you rather go home or wait at the hospital?"

"No. I couldn't do anything."

Moss glanced at him curiously, and shrugged his shoulders. He said: "Well, it's up to you. But keep your mind on your flying."

"I will."

Johnny picked up his parachute and hurried after the others. It was with relief that he climbed into his Vampire. He didn't want to talk to anyone or be with anyone.

The brakes hissed and puffed as he guided the plane around the perimeter track. The control tower was near the northern end of the airfield, and take-off was on runway eighteen. They weren't too well placed to see aircraft on the approach, and Johnny made a mental note to be careful.

At the end of the runway he stopped and watched the first two jets take off in front of him. He performed his vital actions before take-off, and called the control tower. "Alfa Quebec, take-off clearance."

The reply was immediate, crackling metallically in his headphones. "Clear take-off."

He opened the throttle and turned the aircraft on to the runway. Then a thought struck him and he cursed silently. He had forgotten to check that there were no aircraft on the final approach.

Well, it was too late now. He opened the throttle wide. The seat pressed urgently into his back, and the concrete runway rolled, faster and ever faster, under his feet.

Smoothly the aircraft left the ground, and

Continued on page 32

Rehearsals without tears under *Top Town*'s producer. The smile beneath Colehan's moustache has a soothing effect upon performers

Barney Colehan, mayor of top town

by JOHN ENNIS

With his TV cameras he descends on the citizens, and moulds a bunch of amateurs into a slick variety team

A TEAM of amateur entertainers from Blackpool were performing well in one of the B.B.C. *Top Town* television programmes in April, 1954. Up in his portable control box Barney Colehan, the producer, began to congratulate himself on yet another smooth-running production when a crash of broken glass jerked his attention to the set on which the next act in this non-stop show was due less than a minute later.

He saw an amateur conjurer standing among the wreckage of his equipment.

For a moment Colehan thought that his show, the success of which comes largely from its fast, slick presentation, was about to appear on millions of television screens like an amateur performance with the village hall curtain stuck.

All that day the conjurer had rehearsed an act which began with a few sleight-of-hand tricks with playing-cards, and ended with a trick based on the pouring of water into tumblers. Now the tumblers were broken and the conjurer was making obvious signs of retreat.

"Push him on," said Colehan through the headset of the studio manager on the studio floor. There was no time for further explanation. The studio manager pushed. The nervous conjurer stood before the camera and, as the previous act finished, began manipulating his cards with no idea of what to do after the last manipulation.

Colehan ordered the following act to be ready on the other set, so that he could have the cameras switched over the moment the conjurer dried up. Then he remembered that the next act on the set being used by the conjurer was a fourteen-year-old boy riding a unicycle that had a pneumatic tyre.

He gave another order and the conjurer's anxiety was increased by a studio hand who crouched at his feet, out of the camera's vision, sweeping up the broken glass.

When the three judges of the contest between teams of entertainers from Blackpool and Bristol emerged from locked rooms in which they had watched the show on an ordinary television set, they had noticed nothing. One, however, remarked: "The conjurer was good, but I should have liked to have seen a little more of him."

Observers marvel at the way Colehan moulds amateurs regularly into a show that gains viewing figures equal to most television variety programmes. "He has infinite patience," says Ted Kavanagh, who, with Dorothy Ward and Tony Iveson, is now one of the contest's regular judges, "and I have never once heard him raise his voice, though the performers are sometimes very hard to handle."

Colehan has produced *Top Town* programmes monthly on television since February, 1954. He has presented teams from fifty towns and estimates that they have contained a thousand acts and at least five thousand people. "And so far," he says, "I have scarcely touched the fringe of Britain's amateur talent."

The current competition, a knock-out with a final to be held in London, has places for fourteen teams. Colehan has yet to choose them from the sixty towns that have applied. Though these fourteen teams will keep *Top Town* going for a year, fresh letters of application arrive daily in Colehan's post.

Viewers seem to be as keen as the would-be contestants, and they make their own decisions, in spite of the views of the judges. Following a struggle between closely matched teams from Bangor and Bradford, supporters of the losing Bangor team wrote wrathfully to Kavanagh. One compared him to a boxing referee who recently gave an unpopular decision, and another suggested that he buy new glasses.

When he accepts a town for the contest, Colehan asks the town clerk to put an advertisement in the local newspaper, asking entertainers to apply. Usually the town hall is inundated with replies. At Liverpool, eight hundred performers attended the preliminary audition.

Colehan asks the town to appoint a panel of local judges, who reduce the applicants to twenty-five acts. At Oxford the organizers held this eliminator in public and raised £750 for guide dogs for the blind.

Then Colehan sees the twenty-five acts and chooses the ten that he thinks will make a good and varied team. He takes over the chosen ten and cuts down their material to what he and they decide are the best parts. Often he offers help and advice about costumes and scenery, and he arranges to have their music orchestrated.

WHEN he suggested changes in the Bradford team recently, an angry correspondent wrote to the local newspaper: "This isn't Bradford versus Bangor—it is Colehan versus Colehan." Colehan pointed out that his first job was to present an enjoyable show to millions of viewers.

In the previous series, Colehan used to show three attractive girls from each town. Contests in the town provided twelve girls from among

whom Colehan chose three on the day he selected the final team.

There are no beauties, however, in the present series. Nevertheless, some enthusiastic town officials selected a dozen girls before they knew they would not be wanted. This caused Colehan considerable embarrassment. When he encountered them at the town hall he was asked to pick three of the girls so as not to disappoint the contestants. His soft-heartedness led him to agree. Later he had to tell the beauties that they were not, after all, required for the programme.

Colehan impresses on all the performers that they are working for a team, and that the individuals do not count. This attitude, he believes, broadens the scope of the show. "If we were running *Top Town* as a talent-spotting contest, there would be no room for police choirs, folk-dancers, brass bands, schoolmasters and undergraduates—all of whom entertain as a hobby, with no thought of changing their professions."

He cannot help noticing, however, that rival producers watch his show carefully for budding talent. David Whitfield, the singing star, first broadcast in Colehan's radio version of *Top Town* in 1952, singing straight songs. Whitfield was then a plasterer.

The day after a team from Oxford competed, a few months ago, Peter Haigh, the shows' announcer, met Eddie Pola, head of light entertainment for the Granada Television Network. Pola asked Haigh for the name of a lorry driver who sang in the Oxford team. Pola has since tied the singer, Roy Dell, to a contract, and Granada is having Dell's voice trained.

Rita Farrell of the New Brighton team is now a member of the Television Toppers dancing troupe; Barbara Hicks, a soprano of the Harrogate team, has since played in pantomime; the four Gitson sisters, who played accordions in the Bristol team, have turned professional, and Joyce Greenaway, who performed a sinuous dance in the Bristol team, was making similar writhings on a tour of Germany last time Colehan heard.

Colehan is full of praise for the amateur performers. "They work in conditions that would put many professionals off their stride. I allow no applause at the end of each act, and there is no gushing compère to give them a build-up. They go on cold and do their stuff."

Surprisingly few snags have arisen from the performers themselves. Once a girl singer, who had recently recovered from laryngitis, found her voice giving out in rehearsal, and Colehan withdrew her from the show. Another time a group of sword dancers rehearsed their dance time after time, always finishing by interlacing their swords in the shape of a star, which they left in the hand of their leader. Unaccountably, for it had never happened before, the star fell to pieces in front of the cameras.

Success came quickly to David Whitfield after he made his radio début in a Colehan programme. At that time he was a plasterer

Rita Farrell, left, joined the Television Toppers after turning professional. She had appeared in *Top Town* for New Brighton

COLEHAN, who is forty-two, studied pharmacy in Leeds before joining the Royal Artillery in 1941. As a major in Germany he began broadcasting with the British Forces' Network, and after the war became a B.B.C. sound producer in Leeds. His easy control of amateurs comes from the six years he spent producing the Wilfred Pickles programme *Have A Go!* In that time he interviewed five thousand people and, in answer to the Pickles cry of "Give 'im the money, Barney," paid out more than £3,000.

He aims at making the *Top Town* performers relax. Sometimes he is unsuccessful. One man in the Hartlepools team sang "La donna è mobile." He had never before sung to anything other than a piano accompaniment. To Colehan's concern, the singer began on the wrong beat and carried on with the orchestra lagging behind. Alyn Ainsworth, the conductor, stopped the Northern Variety Orchestra, leaving the piano to catch up. Towards the end of the song, the orchestra joined in, this time on the same beat as the singer.

Afterwards Colehan said to the singer: "Sorry that happened. I hope it didn't put you off." The man gazed at the producer and replied: "Put me off? If your orchestra had played 'Mairzy Doats and Dozy Doats' I should still have sung 'La donna è mobile.'"

The biggest task of making a performer relax and feel at home Colehan left to a policeman. Leeds Police choir was singing for the Leeds team, and Colehan persuaded the authorities to put a police horse called Michael among the men. The broadcast was in the sunken ballroom of the Royal Hall, Harrogate, where every entrance to the floor is a stairway.

Colehan had a ramp made to cover one set of steps but Michael refused to use it. Eventually his rider tried the horse on an awkward-looking staircase with a sharp turn half-way down, and the horse walked up and down with no trouble.

To make sure that Michael felt at home, his rider spent the day of the show walking him in and out. "He became so blasé," Ted Kavanagh recalls, "that in the end he was spurning the sugar lumps we offered him."

Colehan then thought that this amiable animal might be persuaded to conduct the choir. He had a baton fitted with a disc-like grip for the horse's teeth on one end. In every rehearsal Michael held the baton and nodded his head. At the actual performance, however, he was so relaxed that he spat out the baton after a couple of nods. A hand appeared on viewers' screens, trying to replace the baton, but the horse would have no more of it.

The following day an acquaintance met Colehan, remarked that he had enjoyed the show, then asked, puzzled: "But what were you trying to give that horse? A lollipop?" THE END

The Gitson sisters accepted television and cabaret offers after appearing with their accordions in the Bristol team

Witchcraft in the Library

by WILLIAM BRANDON

ILLUSTRATED BY RICHARD O. ROSE

The professor was truly a magician. Perhaps he couldn't produce white rabbits out of hats, but he could weave a spell to make a dream come true

"Who brought it?" asked the professor. The old man studied the envelope carefully. Finally he said, "Monsieur, I cannot say"

At twenty-eight, Mademoiselle Briand was the youngest by several years of the various assistant librarians at the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris. She was also, by a considerably wider margin, the prettiest, being a slender young woman with a crisp smile and direct brown eyes and sweet but quiet ways. In view of these things, it is significant that she was always known as Mademoiselle Briand and never by her first name, which was Colette.

On this May afternoon, however, Mademoiselle Briand was not entirely herself. Madame Ramage, of the catalogue department, was startled to see Mademoiselle Briand skipping down the hall.

She skipped only twice, but it was nevertheless a definite skip and a merry one. Madame Ramage, who had been in the library since 1911, had never seen anyone skipping there. The Bibliothèque Nationale was devoted to the pursuit of rarefied studies by eminent and elderly scholars, and it was no place for abandoned frolicking.

Shortly afterwards another assistant, Monsieur Pique, was most astonished to come upon Mademoiselle Briand pretending to pluck petals from a daisy which was one of a series of botanical prints displayed on a corridor wall. Monsieur Pique retreated in silent alarm.

A half hour later Monsieur Fidèle, a professor at the Sorbonne, who was engaged on research work at the library, entered the Medieval Map Vault and surprised Mademoiselle Briand in the midst of a pirouette.

She came to a stop and said: "Oh, my goodness!"

"Elegant, gay, charming!" Professor Fidèle said, clapping his hands, but not loudly enough to be heard outside the vault. He was tall and white-haired and wore a cloak.

"I'm so sorry," Mademoiselle Briand said. "I was . . . well, I was dancing. Please forgive me."

"But with infinite pleasure!" Professor Fidèle said. He was fond of Mademoiselle Briand, although in the past her splendid competence had somewhat unnerved him. Now he had the pleasant feeling that they were going to become special friends, and he bent his kindliest look upon her.

"It was lucky it was you and not someone else," Mademoiselle Briand said. She made an effort to regain her composure, but her hair was loose and shining about her shoulders, and a blithe light in her golden eyes refused to be extinguished. She left her composure to fend for itself and said: "You see, I have a rendezvous with a gentleman friend."

"Ah! My felicitations!"

"It is the first I have had for over a year," Mademoiselle Briand explained. "The last boy I knew said I only liked books and he married someone else and so I thought I would never ever again. Have such a rendezvous, I mean.

"And now look! I feel so silly being so excited. And yet that is not quite true. I do not really feel silly at all. Do you think I should? Oh, and it must be an absolute secret. At least until I know who he is."

"How is that? Until you know who he is?"

"I only know his *poste-restante* box number. It is all very romantic, in a way. Months ago Madame Ramage asked me to contribute an article to *Arts And Scholarship* on our collection of Victor Hugo first editions; and after the article appeared a reader wrote to me to discuss the poetry of Victor Hugo, and we began to correspond. But his letters are always just signed 'A Reader.' He's so shy."

"But you still know nothing whatever about him?"

"Oh, I know that he lives somewhere near, because it is a local *poste-restante* address. And he said once that he is not married. He might be someone at the Sorbonne, or he could even be right here in the library. It is so strange, not knowing.

"And yet we have come to know each other so very well. Our ideas, our feelings are in unison. I suppose it has been easier to express our feelings freely by correspondence, and it has been wonderful, like shooting up to the stars in a rocket. And so now he is coming to see me. He is going to be here at five o'clock and we are going walking."

"Your first meeting?"

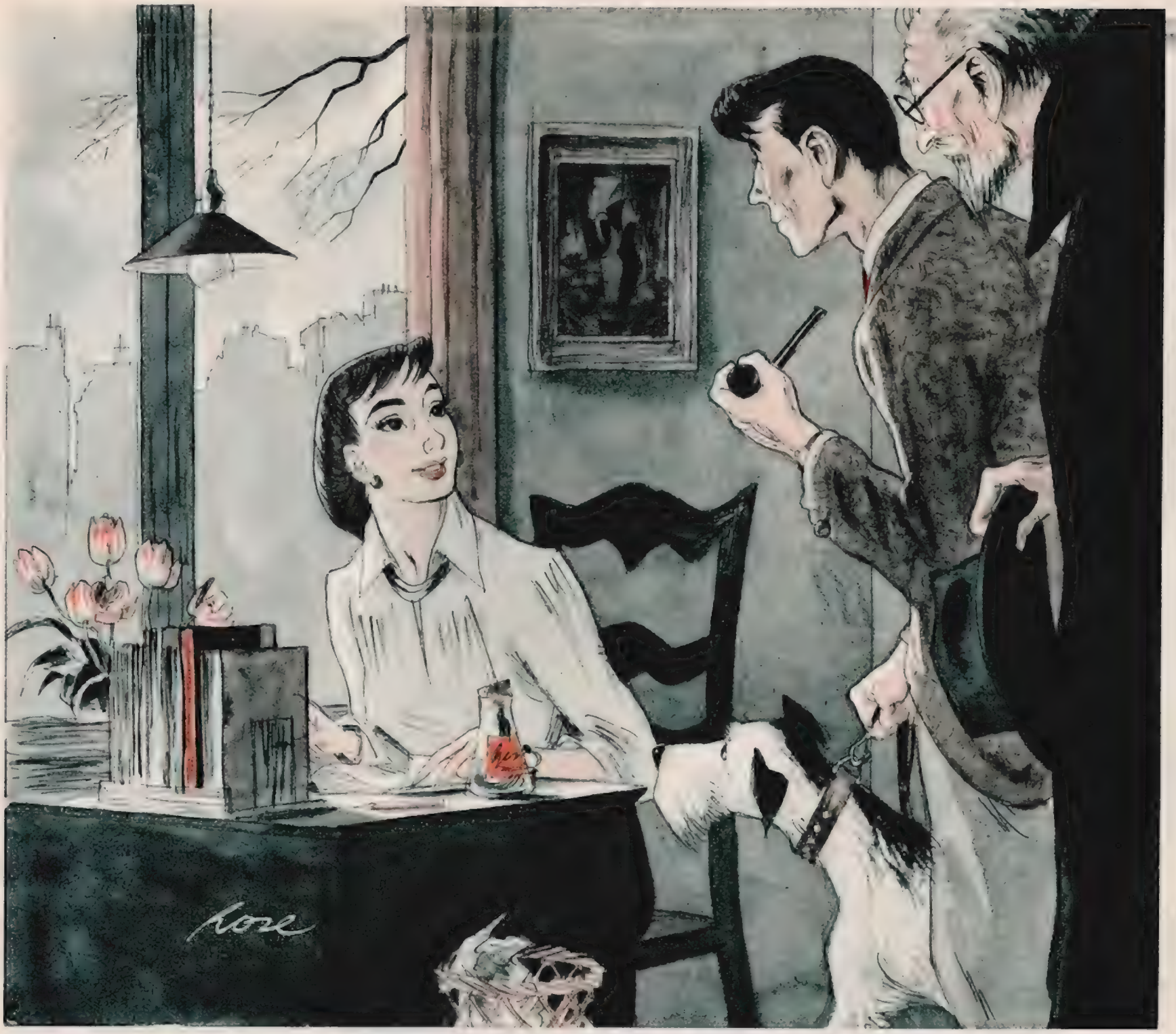
"Our very first."

Professor Fidèle gnawed his lip in concern. He said: "Pardon me, Mademoiselle Briand, but are you not, how shall I say, a trifle precipitate? Headlong?"

"Oh, I know I am, Professor Fidèle. He might find me hopelessly dull. I have thought of that a thousand times."

"No, no, Mademoiselle Briand, I mean you, yourself. Have you no fear of disappointment?"

"But how could I have? It is what I have always dreamed of but thought would never really happen—meeting someone I could be so completely myself with, and yet who was as



Mademoiselle Briand turned as they came in and stared, wide-eyed, at the young man, her breath caught in her throat

lonely as I have been. How could I possibly be disappointed?"

"Alas, in many ways. He may be sixty-seven years old, as I am."

She smiled. "Now you are teasing. I think almost that I shall know him when I see him, just from his letters."

"Which is still more dangerous."

"I do not mean I picture him as handsome. But he will be nice, and especially he will be kind and thoughtful. He will have nice grey eyes and look a little awkward and quiet, and he will wear an old jacket with leather stitched into the elbows. He will probably smoke a pipe and he might even have a dog that goes on walks with him. Heavens—I must arrange my hair, I am so dishevelled! If anyone were to come in and see me like this!"

Mademoiselle Briand paused, breathlessly. "I do not understand what is happening to me. I feel so—so different, as if I do not know myself at all. It should be frightening, but I do not find it so. Now I must hurry. You will not mention this to anyone?"

"You may trust me as a grandfather."

She hesitated at the vault door, strangely disquieted. She said, in a small voice, only half smiling: "And wish me luck."

She looked extraordinarily beautiful, Professor Fidèle thought. He said, with a bow which swirled his cloak: "I am persuaded you will not need it."

She got it nevertheless, a few minutes later, when the ancient concierge hobbled into the Medieval Map Vault with a letter for Mademoiselle Briand. He said: "I thought she was in here, monsieur. This has just come for her by special messenger."

"I'll take it to her," Professor Fidèle said, feeling a nudge of intuition.

The only return address on the letter was a *poste-restante* box number, 2123. After the concierge had gone, Professor Fidèle, with a wanton lack of principle, opened the letter. It read:

> Dear Mademoiselle Briand: I am troubled. Should we meet? I cannot convince myself that we should. Our conversation in the moonlight and shadows of correspondence has been too fine to risk, after all. I hope you will agree with me, I hope that you not be disappointed that I do not appear for our appointment, and I hope you will continue your letters, which will be eagerly awaited as always, by
>
> A READER

"The devil!" Professor Fidèle said between his teeth. He crumpled the letter and thrust it in his pocket. He strode out through Rare Books and Manuscripts down a long corridor, past the exhibition halls, to the great front doors that were like castle gates opening on the outside world of sunshine and ordinary people.

The concierge who had brought the letter was not there. Another equally ancient attendant was seated in a cane chair beside the door.

Professor Fidèle said: "This letter—do you know who brought it? It was delivered by hand; there is no stamp."

The old man smoothed out the envelope and studied it with grave care. He said: "That, monsieur, I cannot say. I have only just arrived. Anatole has just gone home."

Professor Fidèle took the envelope back and re-crumpled it, more thoroughly than before. He said: "He is an assassin."

The concierge said in surprise: "Anatole?"

"The heart shrinks," Professor Fidèle said fiercely. "It shrinks under blows, it shrinks with

Are you combing your hair-OUT?

DON'T IGNORE THIS TIMELY WARNING! Suddenly to find that your hair is coming out in your comb can give you an unpleasant shock. But it also gives you a timely warning —a warning to do something about it *now*, before it becomes more serious. And in order to take proper care of your hair it is important that you should know a little about it first.

SP46

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT HAIR?

Here are some questions often asked about hair. The answers will help you decide how your hair health can best be maintained.

* * * * *

Q What builds hair?

Hair, as it grows, is a living part of the body and like all living cells must be provided with nourishment. The papilla, or true root of the hair, is fed by a tiny blood vessel which supplies it with the organic substances *imperative* for hair growth. There are 18 of these substances, known as amino-acids, and all must be provided in the right proportion.

* * * * *

Q Why does hair die?

In many cases it is because the hair is not getting the amino-acids in adequate quantities from within the body. After a great deal of original research, Silvikrin Laboratories produced a combination of these 18 amino-acids in lotion form which can be massaged into the scalp to the hair roots. This lotion, called Pure Silvikrin, can thus provide the hair roots with their natural food from outside the body.

Sectional drawing showing hair root.

* * * * *

Q What causes dry, dandruffy hair?

This hair condition is often caused by under-activity of the sebaceous glands—the glands which provide an oily substance (sebum) to keep the hair supple and sleek. Effective treatment for this disorder must stimulate the sebaceous glands by massage and at the same time supply an emergency measure of amino-acids until such time as the hair mechanism is once again functioning properly. As you now know, Pure Silvikrin contains all 18 amino-acids in a form that can be massaged through the scalp to the hair roots.

* * * * *

DO YOU KNOW that the specially equipped Silvikrin Laboratories are devoted entirely to the study of the hair and its needs? Here, Silvikrin chemists, using radio-active amino-acids, have proved conclusively that amino-acids can pass from the surface of the skin to the hair roots and become part of the protein of living hair! Silvikrin chemists are continually mastering new scientific techniques, gleaning more and more knowledge of ways in which hair health can be improved by the use of Pure Silvikrin. It should be remembered that Pure Silvikrin is a biochemical treatment. Persevering use is *essential*. For 12/3d. you get a month's supply. Start using Pure Silvikrin today — there is no more positive step towards lasting hair health.

'THE BOOK OF THE HAIR'
Send for this authoritative 36-page book about the growth and care of your hair, enclosing 7½d. in stamps to Silvikrin Laboratories, County Building, Honeypot Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex.

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THE HAIR'S NATURAL FOOD

SILVIKRIN HAIR TONIC, SILVIKRIN HAIR DRESSING, SILVIKRIN HAIR CREAM AND SILVIKRIN SHAMPOOS ALL CONTAIN A MEASURED PROPORTION OF PURE SILVIKRIN.

the years. Miraculously, it blooms again, but with great timidity, and that is the perilous moment."

The concierge cupped a hand to his ear and said: "Pardon, monsieur?"

"It can blossom for a full and happy life or shrink again, and this time wither into dust—the quietest of tragedies."

Professor Fidèle flung his cloak about him with a bitter gesture, preparatory to stalking away. Then he noticed a young man standing on the lawn in front of the library, gazing up at one of the windows in the office wing. The young man was tall and thin, he looked quiet and kind and reasonably awkward, and he was wearing an old jacket and smoking a pipe. A terrier of uncertain denomination was seated on the grass beside him, laughing soundlessly.

Professor Fidèle recovered from his amazement and seized the concierge by the shoulder. He said: "Who is that?"

The concierge peered over his spectacles. "An academic gentleman from the Sorbonne, monsieur, I believe. He comes here almost every day at about this time."

"He is looking at the window of Mademoiselle Briand's office, is he not?"

"Perhaps he watches the birds," the concierge said. "Some people do that. It is a passion they acquire."

PROFESSOR FIDÈLE, his eyes blazing like D'Artagnan's, went down the steps and approached the young man and said: "Permit me to tell you that you are a fool."

The young man, after taking a moment to recover himself, said: "I have often thought so myself, monsieur, but it is good to have support."

"I shall be delighted to do better than that, and furnish verification," Professor Fidèle said, with a cold bow. "Will you follow me, pray?"

The young man hesitated, clicking the stem of his pipe against his teeth. But the presence of the concierge at the door was reassuring. Wondering, and with his tongue in his cheek, he followed Professor Fidèle into the library. The dog bounded up and came along.

Professor Fidèle led the way to Mademoiselle Briand's office. Mademoiselle Briand was at her desk by the window, dreamily watching the spring afternoon. She turned when they came in and looked at the young man wide-eyed, her breath caught in her throat.

"May I introduce Mademoiselle Briand?" Professor Fidèle said.

Mademoiselle Briand came to the young man and took his hand. She was smiling and her cheeks were pink. She said: "I don't even know your name, monsieur."

"Henri," said the young man urgently, "Henri Duplaix." He saw that he was still holding her hand but he was quite unable to let it go.

"There now, you are even shyer than I am," Mademoiselle Briand said. "I am so glad. And you must call me Colette, because, after all, it is not as if we have just met, is it?"

Henri appeared dazed but quite happy. He said: "No, I feel as if I have known you for a long time." The dog came to sit between his feet and look up at him mournfully. He said: "This is Hercule."

"But this is incredible," Colette said. "You are exactly as I pictured you. Even to Hercule."

"Perhaps that is because you have been seeing me every day," Henri suggested. "Every day I stop to look up at your window. You are usually writing."

"Then I must have seen you without realizing that I saw you," she said. "That is how I have acquired a picture of you in my mind. It is all so wonderful. It is like a miracle."

"I think that it is one."

They looked at each other, marvelling.

Professor Fidèle, feeling within him a warm satisfaction, said: "If you will pardon me——"

"I think this is like a dream," Colette said, "a dream where you are picking the bluest flowers in the loveliest fields. You know it is a dream but you cannot really believe that it is one."

"I think that some kind of spell has been cast on us," Henri said.

"If it is a good spell, then it is all right."

"It is an adorable spell," Henri exclaimed.

Professor Fidèle said: "If you will have the goodness to excuse me——"

"Shall we go for our walk?" Colette asked.

"If you wish," Henri said gravely. "Let us go for our walk, Colette. Perhaps we shall not wake up until it is over."

Colette said with equal gravity: "Perhaps we shall never wake up."

They smiled at each other. Professor Fidèle sighed.

He went to the library steps to watch them walk away together, and was gazing at them serenely when a boy rode up on a bicycle and inquired for Mademoiselle Briand.

"You have a message for her?" the professor asked.

"I had an appointment with her, monsieur," the boy said. He was perhaps fifteen years old. "Unfortunately I broke it and I have been debating with myself whether that was wise. We were to discuss poetry. I myself aspire to be a poet."

The professor blinked. He said: "You are acquainted with Mademoiselle Briand?"

"But yes, though she knows me only as *poste-restante* box 2123," the boy said.

For a moment the professor commiserated silently with this artistic youth. However, if he wished to be a poet, suffering would be useful for him. He said with appropriate sadness: "I am sorry. Mademoiselle Briand is no longer with us."

After the boy had gone away, Professor Fidèle looked out across the grounds and could still see Colette and Henri in the distance, walking arm in arm.

Perhaps Colette had yet to discover that Henri was not her anonymous correspondent. They seemed to find this moment of enchantment too absorbing to touch upon the circumstances which had brought it about.

The professor sighed pleasurably. They would unravel the misunderstanding in due course, and, clearly, it would matter little to either of them.

He gave his cloak a rather flamboyant magician's flourish and went home feeling like Fate. THE END

The professor blinked at the boy's words. "I am sorry," he said sadly. "Mademoiselle is no longer with us"

After twenty-seven years service, Sidney Todd thought he knew all the answers. Then came a night of terror—and Birmingham fire brigade was fighting its most bitter . . .

Battle in the flames

by REX GRIZELL

For three days Birmingham's firemen were fighting a blaze just opposite their headquarters. Damage was estimated at £3 million

MARCH 12, 1955. At a quarter past five in the morning, outside the headquarters of the Birmingham Fire and Ambulance Service in Corporation Street, a party of firemen returning from a visit to the Civil Defence College, in Surrey, climbed wearily down from their motor coach. Third Officer Sidney Todd shivered and blinked as the north-east wind whipped clouds of dust from the deserted pavements. He hurried up to his flat to make a cup of tea before going to bed.

He had changed into pyjamas and dressing-gown and was drinking the last of the tea when at six o'clock the silence in the station was shattered by the long, insistent ring of the warning bell. A woman had seen smoke coming from Halford's four-storey cycle warehouse immediately opposite the fire station. Within thirty seconds the brigade was across the street with three pumps and a turntable ladder. Todd pulled on his uniform over his pyjamas and was on the scene within minutes.

There were no flames visible but the huge building was full of smoke. Men wearing breathing apparatus were sent in to find the source of the fire. . . . Suddenly the most terrifying of all fire fighting hazards—a flash over—occurred.

All night long a slow fire, held in check by closed windows and doors which restricted the supply of air, had been heating the building up. When the first fireman went in the heat was so intense that some of the automatic clocks had stopped.

The inrush of air through the windows where the firemen gained entry was all the fire needed to fan it into life. Within a minute the whole of the building was in the grip of roaring flames.

The men inside ran for their lives. One of them, his life-line caught on a projection, was trapped with flames licking round him. An officer climbed the scaffolding erected round the building for extension work and cut the man

free. Badly burned, they both succeeded in climbing down to safety.

Lashed by the bitter wind, the flames became a savage blaze visible eight miles outside the city. Tentacles of fire reached through windows and roofs to set alight buildings across the road. Radiated heat scorched the woodwork of all nearby buildings, blistered the paint of the fire appliances, and forced the firemen back so far that their jets were blown away in the wind or disappeared in steam.

Within an hour two hundred firemen, many of them off-duty volunteers, battled with the biggest blaze of 1955. They used thirty-one appliances, more than ever before at a peace-time fire in the United Kingdom. Twenty-six jets poured twenty thousand gallons of water into the fire every minute.

The steel scaffolding glowed red hot, twisted away and fell, bringing blocks of masonry crashing down among firemen scattering to safety. One fireman was slightly injured when the scaffolding trapped him.

After two hours the firemen began to gain command; with their resources stretched to the limit they had mastered all the secondary fires, and now their jets began to bite into the blazing shell of Halford's. Thousands of bystanders watched the flames turn to clouds of smoke. At midday, Third Officer Todd, his voice hoarse from shouting, his face black with grime and his tunic scorched, returned to his flat for his first rest for thirty-six hours. He was back on duty in the afternoon.

"It was three days before we could withdraw the last man and machine," says Todd. Twelve other firms were affected and the total damage was estimated at £3 million.

The Birmingham Fire Service is the largest in the country outside the London area, and the largest of the fourteen brigades which control ambulance services. The brigade answers all accident calls and moves an average of thirty thousand patients every month.

Assistant Chief Officer Probert, who joined the Birmingham brigade in 1948 from Coventry, where he had led the fire forces throughout the heavy blitzes, has said: "I always heard that Birmingham had the finest fire brigade in the country, and when I came here I was not disappointed."

The Home Office sends to Birmingham, for training or revision courses, almost all the overseas firemen who come to study the latest British methods in fire-fighting.

To supplement government inspections, Birmingham has instituted its own system of inspection to keep the brigade at razor-keen efficiency. Every man, machine and piece of equipment in its eighteen fire stations is reviewed annually by a team of senior officers. Even the accuracy and completeness of the office filing systems is checked.

Last year the Birmingham brigade answered six thousand calls and dealt with two thousand actual fires and two thousand chimney fires. Seven hundred of the fires were in private houses, four hundred in factories, shops and warehouses.

"In the old days, fire fighting was a matter of entering the building and getting water on the spot where the fire was," says Todd, a solidly built, red-faced man with piercing blue eyes who has completed twenty-eight years with the Birmingham Fire Service. Now, however, the rapid expansion of industrial processes in plastics, oils, and chemicals brings with it new dangers for firemen.

"We have to give our men basic training in chemistry, hydraulics, building construction, automatic alarms and electricity as well as in the use of every kind of fire-fighting appliance." Todd began at £3 10s. a week and is now a Divisional Officer, Grade 1, with a salary in the scale of £1,142 to £1,242 a year. He himself has fought fires of all types.

Two years ago Todd was dealing with flames from a flooded basement. One of his men, standing in two feet of water, wet through and holding a wet metal nozzle, accidentally directed the jet on to an electric switch gear. He was severely shocked and had to be carried out for treatment.

Many hazards are unforeseeable. When a warehouse stocked with detergents, soaps, shaving cream, toothpaste and other toilet goods caught fire in Bromsgrove, water from the hoses soon created "a huge bubble bath." On the ground floor a wooden platform lift used for bringing up goods from the basement had burned away, leaving only the open lift shaft.

As the men worked their way into the building the officer in front of Todd slipped and fell towards the open shaft, which led down into the heart of the fire. The man appeared to be plunging to almost certain death. Todd dived forward and grabbed his ankle.

Full length on the floor, unable to get a hand free to blow his whistle for help, Todd was slowly dragged forward over the soapy surface by the other man's weight. "Some of our men found us just in time or we would both have been cooked." Not long ago the same officer fell into a machine pit in a burning factory. Todd pulled him out again.

Often firemen are exposed to greater danger from the weakened building than they are from the fire itself, says Todd.

When a large grain warehouse burned fiercely, so much water was poured in that the grain began to swell and force out the walls. As the building cracked under the strain, Todd and his men went in, hacking holes in the walls with their axes so that the grain could run away and reduce the strain on the building.

In the headquarters duty room a roll of honour with the names of forty-eight firemen who have died in peace-time service with Birmingham Fire Brigade is a constant reminder that fighting fire is a life-and-death affair. A few years ago at a fire in a derelict school Todd suddenly stopped at the edge of a four-foot hole in the first floor. He warned his men about it but later one of the leading firemen fell through and received injuries from which he died.

If it is humanly possible every room in a burning building should be searched, says Todd. Once he was called out to a shop on fire. There was smoke coming from the bedrooms and attics above the shop. Bystanders said there were two sons in the back bedroom. Todd went up the ladder.

"The room was like the inside of a furnace," but he could just see a bed near the window. He climbed in quickly to see if he could find anyone. He reached down and felt an arm. He pulled and it came away in his hand. In the light of the flames he was able to see that it was an arm from a model figure. There was no one in the room.

Most people ask firemen to save their money and valuables but there are some who think of their pets first. One Birmingham fireman remembers a fire where a woman next to him was wailing: "My poor cat! My poor cat's inside there." A woman on the other side of the fireman added: "And so's her old man." Both were safely rescued.

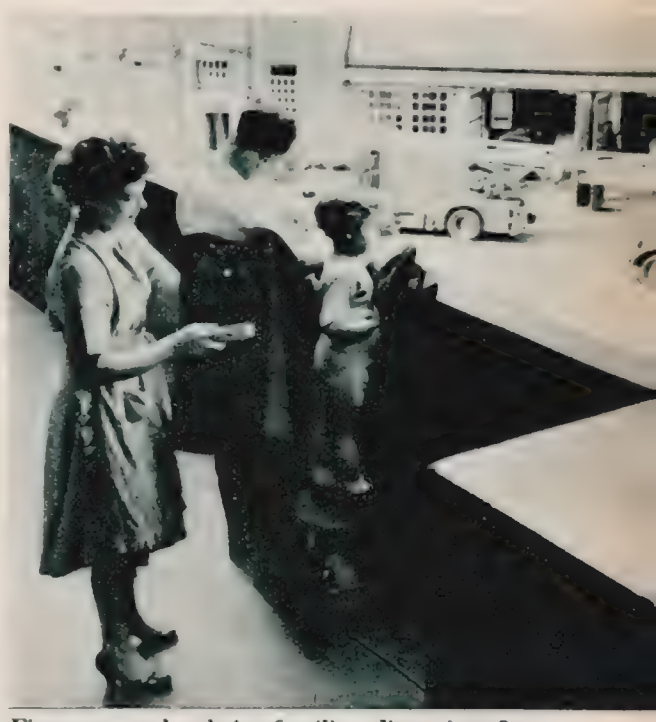
In addition to fighting every kind of fire the brigade answers special service calls. These commonly include taking cats out of trees, small boys' heads out of railings, pigeons out of chimneys and horses out of canals; on one occasion a portly woman who had locked herself out had to be eased free from her own larder window.

When the refrigerating plant in a large sausage factory broke down, the owner bought a quarter of a ton of frozen carbon-dioxide to preserve the sausages already made. The following morning the carbon-dioxide had turned to deadly gas. It took the brigade three hours to make the storage rooms safe.

For twelve years Todd was instructor to the Birmingham brigade, which trains men for fire

Continued on page 45

Third Officer Todd takes over a spell of duty in the control room. Birmingham Fire Service answers six thousand calls a year



Firemen and their families live in flats overlooking the Central Fire Station. The children never tire of watching the engines

Exercises keep the service at a high pitch of efficiency. Nowadays the men are given special training in chemistry and hydraulics

REDUCED PRICES

Half pound–2/-
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FROM THE FACTORY IN A GARDEN!

When Cotlow wanted to film Carr Hartley's animals at tea, he confined the human actors to himself, Dulcy Wedd and Hartley's son Mike. The rest of the cast played their parts brilliantly

ZANZABUKU • 4 **by LEWIS COTLOW**

I meet Africa's animal comedians

This was the strangest farm I had ever seen. Hyenas and zebras roamed around as pets, lions and leopards were kept in pens—and an hilarious menagerie came to tea

ONLY in Africa, I am sure, can one have tea with a kudu, an eland, a baboon, a zebra—and an attractive woman—all at the same time. Not only that, but there will be two white owls looking on and making apparently acidulous comments.

There is probably only one place in Africa where such a party might take place—Carr Hartley's big animal farm near the slopes of Mount Kenya. It is an amazing place, with normally wild animals wandering about like pet dogs, some of them in the houses as well as outside, and still-wild animals in strong pens awaiting shipment to zoos all over the world.

I visited Hartley's farm on my second African expedition, in 1946, when I co-operated with Armand Denis, the television explorer, in filming *Savage Splendour*. And I went back in 1954 to shoot sequences for my own film, *Zanzabuku*.

I had remembered that Hartley had a son—a thirteen-year-old lad named Mike—and it occurred to me that the boy, with his winning smile and appealing ways, would make an admirable central character for my film.

A story about young Mike learning the art of capturing wild animals from his father would make a good thread on which any number of animal sequences might credibly be strung.

Hartley agreed, when I made a long-distance call to him from New York, to help me to work something out. He thought that Mike would enjoy the rôle, which could be shot while he was home from boarding school.

When I arrived with my filming team in Nairobi and mentioned that we were going to Carr Hartley's place at Rumuruti, people looked askance at us. Finally someone said what was obviously on all minds. "The Mau Mau situation is pretty bad, you know."

I knew about Mau Mau killings, of course, but it just did not occur to me that the situation might endanger or even interfere with my expedition.

Hartley himself did not seem very perturbed by the Mau Mau threat, although he did not

On holiday from school, Mike Hartley learns how to handle everything from lions to pythons. With him is Allan Tarlton, the snake expert

A newly captured giraffe takes a playful nibble at Gordon Pollman's hat. "The giraffe," says Cotlow, "is not a vindictive animal, and soon settles to captivity"

Cotlow and his camera team with a group of Turkana tribesmen. In the front row, on the right of his son, is animal hunter Carr Hartley

minimize its seriousness. I learned that he was high on the Mau murder list, and that they had shot at him twice—and missed—as he drove along the twisting road to his farm.

We had been filming for only a short while when the police arrested more than twenty of Hartley's best African workers as suspected terrorists. We were all a little shaken to know that we had been working side by side with men who had taken an oath to kill. Hartley was more perturbed at losing so many workers when there was so much to be done. Their absence slowed down our filming and later almost brought tragedy.

Early in our work, an African warned Hartley that he was going to be attacked that evening by Mau Mau from the swamplands that began only five hundred yards away. Our filming had ended for the day and my staff had driven home to their fortress. Hartley called everyone left on the farm into his home. There we ate and armed ourselves and waited for the attack to come.

We did not listen to the wireless, a common evening entertainment, because its noise might have obscured sounds of approaching attackers. Some of us tried to play cards but had little heart for it. We talked in desultory fashion, listened intently during the long silences, and wondered what might happen. I was amazed to see the quiet calm and composure of the women —Mrs. Hartley and her sisters, Dulcy Wedd and Thelma Randall, and Hartley's secretary, Nancy Drew.

The attack never came, probably because we were prepared and well armed. The next morning Carr found that some of his cattle had been stolen. The Mau Mau had made a raid all right, but to get food rather than kill people. We went back to work.

IN spite of the difficulties we got some of the animal sequences we wanted, among them one with Chui, named after the Swahili word for leopard. Hartley had trapped the magnificent creature some time before and kept him in a strong cage in the compound.

Chui was by no means tame, but his wildness seemed to have been tempered by kind treatment. My one worry was that he was too mild a beast to make a good movie sequence. Graceful and lovely as he was, I was not interested in pictures of a leopard purring and licking one's hand.

Leopards are primarily nocturnal and prefer wooded areas; getting satisfactory shots of them is almost impossible. So I decided to try to induce Chui to act savagely.

To tempt him into action, we decided to exploit his fondness for baboon meat. Hartley had in his private menagerie a mother baboon with two babies. We didn't intend using the baboons as bait, but rather their smell.

First we transferred the touchy and temperamental leopard to a portable cage, and removed him to the big arena about three miles away. Then we took the baboon and her children, and allowed them to sit and play within sight and smell of the leopard. We could see and hear the beast pacing more eagerly across his cage.

The baboon and her children were removed, two cameramen were stationed at strategic spots, and several of Hartley's helpers were ready to keep the leopard, when released, on course within camera range.

I stood with Hartley close to the path that Chui was supposed to take on his way to the spot where the baboons had been. Since we had already taken shots of the baboons, we hoped to establish that the leopard was after them. The soundest way of doing this was to make the leopard actually go after them.

He would, we hoped, spring immediately to where he had seen them and could smell them. Then he would follow their trail to the far gate from which we had taken the baboon and her children out of the arena. At that point Hartley's

The limitless sky is the setting for

THE PROVING FLIGHT

a dramatic new serial by DAVID BEATY

Bellamy and Lalette. One of Zelinski's superb illustrations

EMPEROR ALFA DELTA is airborne. The shining new hope of Britain's aircraft industry heads out over the Atlantic. Behind the Emperor, at London Airport, are the trappings of a star's departure: the flowers and fanfares, the V.I.P.s and the glamour. Ahead is a glorious triumph, dollars and domination of the Atlantic.

Now she is on her own, a seventy-ton jet airliner carrying Britain's hopes and prestige—and a group of tense, unhappy people. They are prisoners of the ambition of one man, a ruthless, power-loving tycoon. On their island in the sky, they fight out jealousies and rivalries and watch the flowering of a tender love affair . . . while hazard after hazard threatens this untried aircraft.

That is the up-to-the-minute theme of David Beaty's great new novel *The Proving Flight*, a superbly told drama set in the limitless kingdom of the sky and in the glittering centres of London, New York and Bermuda.

It is a compelling study of human courage and devotion on one frightening journey; of those aboard the Emperor. . . .

Sir James Joliffe, the ruthless chairman of Air Endeavours, has invested millions in the Emperor. Now as he senses disaster he will risk his life—and the lives of others—to save a dream.

His chosen aide, Captain Bellamy, has failed him; he will not sacrifice lives for Joliffe's savage ambitions. And on the flight deck Bellamy faces the cold, professional arrogance of his fellow captain, Cavendish, a veteran of the air who is losing the touch that made him one of the supermen of flying and who fears that the younger man is usurping him.

Fearfully watching these men are the hostesses, Angela and Lalette, living through a nightmare and competing for the love of Andrew Bellamy, who has their lives in his hands. . . . The crew, cool, experienced technicians, see disaster written on the charts and dials before them.

This is a vivid, behind-the-scenes story by a writer who knows the special world of the airman. David Beaty, a pilot himself, has put power and authority into a compelling narrative. *The Proving Flight* begins . . .

IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

men would have some other choice food waiting to console him.

It was a good plan if it worked. But when men are around, few animals act naturally, so we just hoped for luck. At the last moment I thought of another kind of luck—involving my life rather than the taking of a picture. I turned to Hartley and asked: "What if the leopard comes for one of us?"

He replied: "Stand still. Don't move an inch. He'll probably go on past. Anyway, I'll take care of things."

The leopard was released and came stalking swiftly through the trees and underbrush along the route we had intended. Chui was an impressive creature. Beautiful as he had seemed in his cage, he was far more spectacular in the open, moving ahead almost like liquid. I was delighted to see two cameras trained on him.

Once, he slowed down and darted quick and uncomfortable glances at the humans around, but the smell of baboon meat lured him ahead to a spot within fifteen feet of Hartley and me. I held my breath as he passed, but he ignored us and went on his way.

Quite suddenly, he veered to the right, away from the baboon's trail and almost out of camera range. Perhaps the wind shifted and fooled him, or our presence threw him off.

Hartley signalled a native to turn Chui back on route. The fellow obeyed the signal readily enough, taking half a dozen steps towards the leopard's path. Chui should have angled off to the left, back on route. But he didn't. He stopped, faced the man, and lashed his tail in annoyance.

This was too much for the inexperienced African, who was seized with sudden fear. Hartley and I sensed it a few hundred feet away, and I'm sure that the leopard did too.

Fear made the man do the worst of all things—run away. If he had had the courage to hold his ground, Chui would almost certainly have continued his way. But the fellow panicked and took to his heels.

In that instant, in two terrific bounds, Chui was on him, knocking him to the ground. Hartley, rifle in hand, was already running fast towards the spot, with me not far behind. Just as we rushed up, the leopard sank his fangs into the native's throat.

It was a tough shot for Hartley to make, with the native and beast so close together, but he did not hesitate. His first bullet struck the leopard and forced him to bound away. Three more quick shots dropped him about ten feet from us.

The man was horribly mauled and bleeding profusely, but still alive. Hartley ordered him to be carried to a truck and rushed to hospital—which was quite a trip, but the only hope for the fellow. For weeks he hovered between life and death—and finally recovered. . . .

We got many sequences in the country around Hartley's farm, most of them involving young Mike. There were several showing him feeding and caring for the many different animals at the Hartley place.

One of the most satisfying was the giraffe hunt and capture. During a rare dry spell, we drove in Hartley's trucks to a region of flat grassy plains about fifty miles away, and located a good herd of giraffe, which at our approach ambled off in the typical sedate and rhythmical gait of these beasts.

Our open truck, equipped with long poles and looped rope for lassoing, picked up speed, while the camera truck tried to keep pace over the rough terrain. Mike and a helper extended the long pole, then lightly dropped the noose over the giraffe's neck.

This is the crucial moment in any giraffe capture, for a giraffe's neck can be broken if he is stopped too abruptly. And even if his neck is not broken, his heart may burst at the sudden strain put on it by an abrupt stop from a full gallop.

The truck slowed down gradually as the rope tightened on the giraffe, restraining the animal gently but firmly. Then, when the truck was travelling at less than fifteen miles an hour, two workers leaped from it with the rope in their hands and ran along with the giraffe, pulling it finally to a stop.

Once the animal knew that it was captured, it

Continued on page 45

Furnishing with a fortune

by JOHN HARMAN

George Smart will fit out an emperor's palace or a sheikh's harem. He courts clients willing to pay £45 for a door handle

THE letter from Ethiopia which arrived on the desk of George Smart, the contracts manager of Hampton's, a London furnishing firm, was dated September 22, 1955, and seemed to ask for the impossible. Emperor Haile Selassie was building a palace at Diredawa, about two hundred miles east of Addis Ababa, and wanted complete furnishings for a throne room.

This in itself was not an unusual order. The firm had specialized in such work for over a century. The problem was the delivery date. The room had to be ready for use in eight weeks.

Smart, who is thick-set, brisk and accustomed to clients who ignore practical considerations, immediately arranged for the manufacture of state splendour costing £8,000. His list included two gilded thrones (£235 each), eighteen gilt chairs (£51 each), a large crimson carpet (£610) and red damask cut and draped ready for hanging (£3,000).

Teams of craftsmen put in overtime to complete the furnishings by the end of October. "Transport to Ethiopia the usual way by sea and rail would have taken about a month," says Smart. "I decided to send them by air."

After an anxious two-day delay at Malta caused by engine trouble, and a further delay at Addis Ababa during the emperor's silver jubilee celebrations, they were landed at Diredawa on November 10. By November 15—seven weeks and five days after the letter had been written—Africans had carried them up to the palace and fixed them in position.

Smart was particularly relieved to hear that the emperor approved of two large Ethiopian lions, carved in mahogany and decorated with 22-carat gold. In the absence of any specifications in the letter, the designs had been improvised by studying Ethiopian coins and a crest on the notepaper.

At a less hurried pace, Smart has since furnished the rest of the palace in every detail, from crystal chandeliers in the bedrooms to cupboards in the kitchens. Aged forty-eight, he does business on this scale to the value of £650,000 a year. Among his department's contracts have been the furnishing of a luxury hotel in Bermuda, private railway coaches for the Queen Mother, public rooms and staircases in the royal yacht Britannia—"we had to make sure that Prince Charles could not get his head between the banisters"—and a banqueting hall for the Nizam of Hyderabad in India which required a table sixty feet long, equipped with linen, cutlery and glassware for a hundred guests.

The £1 million-worth of business at present in his order book ranges from the provision of teddy bears in the nursery of a liner to the furnishing of a palace and harem in Saudi Arabia for £100,000.

"We can do any job of furnishing almost anywhere in the world," he says. When a man walked into one of the firm's showrooms and announced that, as the Pakistani ambassador to Turkey, he wished to furnish an embassy in Ankara, Smart flew out two days later and supervised the job.

Most contracts, though, are harder to come by, and he is helped in his search by eight colleagues, each of whom concentrates on one or more types of work—such as schools, churches, banks, courts of law, hospitals, pubs and swimming pools. Also agents abroad watch for opportunities.

"Luck plays an important part in the career of a contracts man," says Douglas True, who is Smart's deputy. "Often we get to know of jobs by hearing gossip at parties, or by reading newspaper stories about new buildings." Recently Smart was in an architect's office and saw, by accident, plans of a new reception suite for a big West Country factory. He promptly sent the factory an estimate for furnishing it.

A big contract which Smart has obtained is for decorating a new restaurant. The job involves fitting a special ceiling

Britain's top furnishing firms compete eagerly to quote the lowest prices—Hampton's name their most frequent rivals as Maple's, Waring and Gillow's, and Heal's—but many clients, at the time of asking for estimates, are not chiefly worried about cost, and winning a contract can depend entirely on the attractiveness of the designs suggested. Smart therefore tries to interest prospective buyers by giving them plans, coloured drawings and sometimes models showing how jobs would look when finished.

COURTING the clients who can afford £1,000 for a chandelier, or £45 for a door handle, has encouraged him to anticipate likes and dislikes. When estimating for board rooms, he usually submits a minimum of three schemes: "traditional," in case the directors are getting on in years and prefer a Queen Anne style; "contemporary," should a younger element have the upper hand; and "modern," which is a blend of traditional and contemporary, calculated to please both age groups.

In the Middle East especially, where sheikhs, for example, like their homes to be lit very brightly to balance the sunlight and demand plenty of pegs in every room for hanging up cloaks and head-dresses, the hunting of contracts involves making a good impression socially.

Francis Lodge, one of Smart's men who specializes in that area, has learned to be honoured if his host at a meal pays him the compliment of handing him the eyeballs from a

In a room he recently furnished, Smart meets the First Secretary at the Liberian Embassy

Hampton's fit out new luxury liners. At the Battersea works name plaques are completed

As contracts manager Smart makes it his job to inspect fittings in the curtains department

roast sheep. But he could not disguise his horror when an "interesting ceremony" complete with a local band to which he was invited turned out to be an execution.

Smart considers that from the viewpoint of craftsmanship one of the most satisfying contracts was furnishing the council chamber of Richmond town hall, Surrey. "The job, which was done entirely in English oak, could be spread over nine months, giving us time to do plenty of carving by hand."

Most clients, like Emperor Haile Selassie, insist on haste. Among the department's trickiest assignments was the recarpeting of a single vast office in a factory at Slough, Buckinghamshire. Twenty-five men moved in on a Friday evening, and when Smart made a tour of inspection forty-eight hours later they had laid a mile and a quarter of heavy green Wilton in strips twenty-seven inches wide.

Theatres also want work done at weekends, but when a famous one in London was being reupholstered, the job was too big to be completed before the Monday's performance. "We put in as many screws as we could and hoped for the best," says True. "Unfortunately, two men in the audience stopped the show by falling through their seats."

Days are saved in installing ornate ceilings, pillars, balustrades and similar items by moulding them in sections in fibrous plaster—plaster on a backing of canvas stretched on wood—and tacking or screwing them into position. "Any wood or stone can be imitated at a quarter the cost of the real thing," Smart says.

Clients' preferences for furnishings with an appearance of age lead Smart to have the bloom taken off new furniture in antique styles. The wood is "distressed," as the process is called, by being knocked with pieces of timber and rubbed with chains. This is done at one of the firm's London factories which supplies much of the furniture for his contracts.

WHEN items are destined for handling by unskilled labour abroad, they are packed extra strongly. The Nizam of Hyderabad's banqueting suite, for example, was dispatched in metal-lined containers. But this has not always guaranteed safe installation.

In Africa, Lodge was faced with the problem of getting a freshly unpacked, 7-cwt. electric cooker into a kitchen with a narrow doorway. He tried to persuade the natives to hoist it through a window.

"They decided instead that speed was the answer to squeezing it through the door. Eight of them ran with it, smashing the door and the cooker."

Smart, who has a son and two daughters, and lives at Purley, Surrey, was born in Portsmouth. At the age of seventeen, he was articled as an apprentice to a local furnishing firm. "On my first morning, I cleaned the windows."

He joined his present company in 1929, and soon realized that a contracts man is expected to have a wide knowledge of his subject. "The chairman asked me to fetch a 'what-ho,' and I was baffled," he says. "Not wanting to betray my ignorance, I searched the showrooms for anything which could possibly be described by that name. Then I was told about Watteau, the painter."

While Smart was in the army during the war, his department supplied nets for camouflage by organizing the netting industry in Cornwall. In addition, tents, gun-covers and similar equipment were made by the million. Some of the firm's sleeping bags, fitted with air pipes for sleeping under deep snow, were used by saboteurs in occupied Europe. Today, Smart carries out substantial orders for the Services.

One of his constant furnishing problems is to steer clients away from lapses in taste, like mixing furniture of different periods. On such occasions, he argues firmly that the result would not do credit to him, or to the client.

An exception was when the wife of a shipping magnate visited a liner which was being fitted out. Impulsively, she picked up a wall-bracket which had been specially designed for the contract, held it against a bulkhead and declared it to be perfect.

"The foreman pointed out that she was holding it the wrong way up," says Smart, "but she did not want to listen. And that is why one of my rooms is travelling round the world with its lights upside down." THE END

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

THE SILENT

John Curtis had risked his life to give me this

Unless I acted quickly, Lynn's killer would e

At last the pieces were falling into place. I felt certain now that Ray French had killed my wife. At three o'clock this afternoon he was marrying a girl who would be a vital witness —and wives can't give evidence against their husbands. . . .

I had to stop that wedding!

My name is Mike Granville. I run a small electronics firm. Lynn, my wife, had vanished three weeks earlier, and I found that she had been having an affair with Ray. After she disappeared a divorce petition was served on me, falsely alleging misconduct with my technical assistant, Stella Curtis.

As it happened, I was in love with Stella—but I also had a very great admiration for her husband, John Curtis. A fine scientist, he was now dying from the effects of an experiment which had backfired.

When I found Lynn's body, hidden under a pile of anthracite in our coal cellar, it was to John that I went for advice: I knew I would automatically be suspected—unless I could find the killer before the police found Lynn.

The next day I had to go down to Wales for the final tests of a device I had made for uranium prospecting in Africa. Dr. Benson had asked me to handle it out there. Of course, I had to say I couldn't. . . .

While I was in Wales I learned that John had somehow found the strength to go to London to make inquiries on my behalf. He was at home now, dangerously ill. But he had left a message for me—I had to stop Ray French's wedding.

I stopped at Gloucester, on my way back, and rang Stella. She was queer on the phone—full of hints and guarded allusions about something in the paper. And so when I got back to my car I opened the Sunday paper I had bought.

It was quite a short paragraph. But it was headed in strong black type: "Girl's Body Found in Cellar. . . ."

FINAL INSTALMENT

Three Hours To Go

THE paragraph read: "Twenty-seven year old Mrs. Lindsey Granville, wife of Mr. Michael Granville, the top-rank radar expert, was found dead in the cellar of her home at Hockbridge, Bedfordshire, yesterday evening. She had been missing for three weeks.

"The police declined to comment on the likely cause of death. They wish to interview a man, believed to be in Wales, who they think may be able to help them in their inquiries."

I'd clung to the safety valve too long. I might have expected it. Sergeant Booker hadn't looked like a man who spent his time growing roses.

A man believed to be in Wales. . . . I remembered the car that had turned in at Llanveryan aerodrome as I left. If it was what I now thought it to be, it was by about ninety seconds that I had not been interviewed. . . .

I glanced over my shoulder but it was only two women coming down the street. I started the car and accelerated away through the quiet town. The police would have my number now and a description of the car. I didn't know how these things worked. Was I now so badly wanted that they would stop me on the road, or did they reserve that sort of high pressure stuff for escaped bank raiders?

Don't take the most direct route to London anyway; if anything they'll watch the Oxford road. At Witney, fork left for Bicester and Aylesbury. . . .

I stopped a couple of miles from Aylesbury and found a crumpled cigarette in the cubby hole and smoked that. Three hours yet. What did I do now?

John expected me to tackle Ray French in some way. He expected me to put a stop to a wedding designed to prevent the police from coming at evidence which would clear me. How John had come to that conclusion I hadn't the faintest idea, but I was sure he was right.

I knew who had been in the room at Greencroft on the afternoon Lynn died, and presumably Margot du Caine knew too. Somehow in the next three hours I had to devise some means of stopping Ray French from marrying her, even if it meant tackling him in his flat and tying him up and locking the door. A delay in the wedding for even twenty-four hours might give time for the saving moves to be made.

While John Curtis quietly died in Letherton. That was it, wasn't it? It was all laid out on a plate for me. I saved myself and he bled to death. As simple as that.

I chucked the cigarette away and started up the car. After about five miles I turned left again, away from London and towards Letherton.

As I got near the place I realized that the cottage might be watched. Stella was the woman in the case, and the police would expect me to turn up there. But a wood came down behind the cottage at the back, and a narrow lane, beginning at the Cock and Pheasant half a mile away, wound round to the other side of the wood. I took that.

About thirty yards separated the wood from the cottage, and at the last tree I took a good look round. No one. Smoke came from a chimney of the cottage, and upstairs the curtains were part drawn as if to keep out the light. Not that there was much light, because heavy clouds had blown up.

I jumped over the hedge and made across the grass. I didn't bother to knock. Stella was in the kitchen.

"Mike!" She stared at me with huge dark-shadowed eyes.

"Are you alone?"

"At present. Except for John. I came down to refill his bottles. But if——"

"How is he?"

"He came round about nine. Mike, why ever did you come here when——?"

"How did he get up to London last night?"

STARTLED by the way I said it, she told me. Her face was so young that being dead-tired only refined it. ". . . I couldn't think why he wanted the soda water. When I got back he wasn't here; only a note. He came back at midnight—didn't seem much worse at first."

"And then?"

"The police have been here, asking. . . . Did anyone see you come in?"

"I don't think so——"

"Darling, what a terrible thing; when John told me. . . . Who killed her, Mike?"

I said: "Tell me about John."

The kettle was boiling and she switched it off.

"A haemorrhage about five. Dr. Lewis

He was breathing in deep gasps, like a man drowning. Stella stood with trembling lips as I prepared to press the syringe home . .

ILLUSTRATED BY FANCETT

PARTNER

ıance—and I was throwing it away.

ape *by WINSTON GRAHAM*

wanted to get him to hospital but he was too weak. They gave him a blood transfusion here at seven. We couldn't get a nurse but the district nurse came in for a couple of hours. She'd just gone when the police came. . . ."

"What did they want to know?"

She began to fill the bottle. It was queer standing here in this cottage kitchen on a domestic chore. "They thought I might know where you were. I choked them off—made the excuse that John. . . . They're coming back later."

"Stella," I said, "what chance is there now for him?"

"Dr. Lewis didn't say much. This—this is the way people die of this complaint. But he's been better since about eleven."

"Can I go and see him?"

"Yes. Yes, for a few minutes. Can you tighten this screw?"

I took the bottle from her. Her fingers were cold.

I said: "Did he tell you where he'd been last night?"

"Enough for me to know you ought to be in London now."

We looked at each other. Then she turned to fill the other bottle.

"What did he tell you?" I said.

"He says he reasoned it out. This man you spoke of, Ray French, told you that Lynn was . . . promiscuous, didn't he?"

"Well?"

"Well, John apparently reasoned that Ray French couldn't be mistaken. That is, he couldn't be wrong. Either he was right or he was lying."

"Yes, I see that."

"Then he thought, *you* didn't think she was, but you might be deceived. Who else might know? The best chance was Simon Heppelwhite, who, you told him, had employed Lynn for some years and who had been a great friend of hers. He thought Simon Heppelwhite might have views on the subject."

Too much steam had got into the bottle and it suddenly bubbled and spat hot water. She held it away from the kettle.

"Let me do it," I said.

"No. . . ."

"And what did Simon say?"

"He said no. He said it was nonsense. He'd known about Lynn and Ray French for months and had quarrelled with Lynn about it, for letting you down. She was mad over Ray French; no one else."

I took the second bottle from her. "And then?"

As I spoke there was the sound of a heavy fall overhead.

Stella had been going to refill the kettle, but now she dropped it and fled up the stairs, and I was close behind her. We got in to see the bed empty and John sprawled upon the floor beside it. The whiteness of his skin when we rolled him over was nearly grey.

"John," she said. "*John . . . !* Mike, I had to leave him; there was no other way. . . ."

He was breathing, but there was no pulse at all.

"Can you help me?" I said.

"Of course."

I took his shoulders and she his feet. He seemed a terrific weight. Somehow we got him back on the bed.

"He said he'd be all right while I went downstairs. He must have tried to get out and fallen. . . ."

Now that he was back in a normal position his breath was coming in deep gasps, like a man drowning.

"The doctor left something," Stella said, her lips trembling. "If he fainted again. That syringe. Cora-something."

"Coramine." I picked up the syringe and held it up to the light. "Shall I do it?"

"Please."

I put the thing somehow into his arm and pressed it home. His skin was sweaty and cold.

"I'll get Dr. Lewis," she said.

"Wait. I think he's coming round."

Perhaps my clumsy puncture had roused him. His eyelids were fluttering. Stella moistened his lips, and suddenly I found him looking straight at me. Without a sound he said my name.

"John," I said.

His eyes travelled to Stella. "Sorry about that," he muttered. Then he frowned. "You shouldn't be here, Mike. Time is it?"

"Plenty of time yet."

"You got my message?"

"Yes, it's all right. I'm going to act on it."

His eyes closed then. I looked at Stella and nodded. She slid out of the room.

He'd gone off again. I felt for the pulse at the root of his neck; it was just there. On the table by the bed was a glass pot on a stand with a rubber tube and a filter, and a few other odds and ends. The light in here was filtered by the curtains, discreet and without shadows. After a bit I went to the window and looked out. The garden was empty.

She came back. "He's not in but they'll ring me as soon as they can find him."

I nodded.

We were silent for a time. The drug was having a good effect on him, but he hadn't come round again.

She said: "You must go, Mike."

"Not yet."

"What time is the wedding?"

"There's time."

"How can you stop it?"

I said: "What else did John tell you about last night?"

"He went to see Margot du Caine."

"*What?*"

"I'm only telling you what he told me. There was a girl there with Simon Heppelwhite—I think John said her name was Joy Fraser. She knows Margot du Caine and is going to her wedding today.

"I don't know how much John told Joy Fraser or what she said; but it came out that Ray French had been making a great attempt to get the wedding put forward. A week ago he almost had a row with everyone concerned, and at last Margot agreed to get married by licence today."

"I still don't see why John. . . ."

"He said if Ray French was innocent the haste to get married to that extent was hard to understand. If he was guilty—and he was sure he was!—then the haste was easier to explain. You only had to look on Margot as an accessory, especially if she was an innocent one. . . . I don't know what he said to Joy Fraser, but whatever he said must have impressed her, because she took him straight along to the du Caines' flat and introduced him."

"And then?"

"He talked to the girl and to her mother. Again I don't know what he said, but whatever he tried didn't come off. They wouldn't believe him."

The man on the bed stirred and she was across

Continued on page 36

I knocked his fingers away from my throat . . . and felt something hit me hard across the eyes

Special coaches require personal attention. Stevens sees off the Warrington Rugby League team at Euston

The comfort of travellers is Stevens's concern. At Willesden depot he checks sleeping-car accommodation

Any complaints on the seven-thirty?

When railway passengers grumble hard Inspector Andrew Stevens will always listen—and investigate

by KEITH ELLIS

WEARING THE BOWLER HAT and blue serge suit of a British Railways passenger train inspector, Andrew Stevens recently called on a flower grower in the tiny village of Eaton Bray, in Bedfordshire. The 7.30 p.m. from Euston had regularly been arriving ten minutes late at Perth, Scotland, and the flower grower was the cause.

"Every afternoon, he loaded hundreds of boxes of flowers on to the local train at Stanbridgeford," says Stevens, "and this delayed its arrival at Leighton Buzzard. Both there and at Bletchley, where the flowers were put on the Perth train, there were further delays. The Perth train lost more time at Rugby, where the flowers for Birmingham had to be unloaded, and again at Crewe, where boxes were transferred to trains for Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow."

After a talk with the grower, Stevens arranged for a through van to Glasgow to be attached to the local train at Stanbridgeford. This enabled the station staff to load the flowers before the train came in. "To make it quicker and easier to move the flowers for the other destinations, I had them packed in separate sections. After that, the seven-thirty arrived in Perth on time."

Stevens is a short, serious, fifty-one year old Scot whose job is to ensure that the passenger trains in his district are punctual, clean and efficient. Acting on his own initiative, on the orders of the district operating superintendent or following public complaints, he is responsible for all non-electric passenger traffic on the main line from Euston and Broad Street to a point about a mile south of Northampton, and on the St. Albans, Dunstable, Oxford, Cambridge, Banbury and Newport Pagnell branches. "I'm the eyes and ears of the superintendent," he says.

Passengers complaining about late trains, he believes, often fail to appreciate how easily and unforeseeably delays may occur. He has known trains to be late because of seasonal cress traffic from Berkhamsted, or an unexpected load of milk from Buckingham.

Trains may also be late because of mechanical defects, cattle straying on the line and—especially on Sundays—engineering work. "The biggest curses of all," he says, "are fog and falling snow. People who complain about late arrivals when the weather at Euston is fine fail to realize that the delay may be caused by bad weather in Lancashire."

Once a train is late, it is liable to further delays all along the line. "A coal train, more heavily laden than usual, once held up the three-thirty from Rugby at Leighton Buzzard," he recalls. "It arrived in Watford three minutes late. By then it had lost its path on the down fast line, and had to wait a further ten minutes for the five twenty-five to pass. It arrived in Euston thirteen minutes late."

Whenever he travels by rail, Stevens keeps a strict watch on timing. On October 8, 1952, after missing the 8.1 a.m. through checking traffic at Watford, he was travelling on the 8.9 from Watford to Euston when the train made an unscheduled stop at Hatch End. After two minutes, he stepped out and asked a porter the reason for the delay. "Something wrong at Harrow," he was told.

Stevens rang Euston train control from the signal-box. An express from Perth had run into the back of the 8.1, they told him, and a north-bound Liverpool and Manchester train had ploughed into the wreckage. All four lines were blocked. "Right," said Stevens. "I'll cancel the eight-nine at Hatch End."

After turning out the passengers, he rang Harrow and got permission to drive on the eight-nine's engine to what was the second worst rail crash ever recorded in Britain.

Stevens noted that the last four carriages of the Perth train were still on the rails. After making sure they were clear of passengers, he hooked them on to his engine and hauled them back to Watford. Later he hauled to Willesden several carriages which had been buried under wreckage. He spent the rest of the day regulating traffic and helping the breakdown men to clear the line. In the afternoon he managed

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

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Fuzzy-wuzzies—*one of the "special" sandwiches so quickly and easily made with Dairylea.*

Cut the crust from the long side of a sandwich loaf and spread the loaf with Dairylea. Cut to form a long rectangular slice, and trim the crusts. Spread lemon curd on the Dairylea and sprinkle with desiccated coconut. Dairylea is delicious with anything sweet. Cut the slice diagonally to form diamond-shaped open sandwiches.

VIEWERS!
Look in at ITV for more good food ideas by Kraft

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Make a plate of sandwiches with Dairylea next time your friends look in for tea—they'll love the Fuzzy-wuzzies shown here. Keep a box of Dairylea handy for quick snacks at any time of day. Dairylea comes in small-portion packets 1/3d, or half-pound blocks, 2/3d. Ask your grocer for Dairylea today.

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Sellotape

at home tonight

for mending binding and sealing

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C&C

"If you don't pay me, I'll tell all your creditors that you did"

to phone his wife. "She was a bit worried," he says. "Thinking he was doing a good turn, a porter at Watford had rung her to say I had caught the eight-one."

Stevens busies himself with every detail of train operation. He may point out to a guard that his train's tail lamp is missing, or reprimand a porter for being rude to passengers. If a train is overcrowded, he may recommend that in future extra carriages, or a relief, be put on. He examines lavatories to see that they are clean, and equipped with soap and towels.

Before being coupled up, all Euston carriages are cleaned at the Willesden plant. A machine squirts water over them, follows with a stream of oxalic acid solution, and after ten minutes rinses this off with more water. It then dries them with flannel flails.

Inside the carriages, cleaners pick up litter, remove the carpets and sweep the floors. After vacuum-cleaning the upholstery, they wash the floors, windows and paintwork, and then replace the carpets which have been cleaned and—if necessary—washed. They also clean out the lavatories and sweep the corridors. Finally, a foreman makes a thorough inspection.

"Trains with a quick turn-round at Euston are given a 'touch-up job,'" says Stevens. "The carriages are swept out, the upholstery is brushed and the lavatories are cleaned."

Even after a thorough clean, however, mysterious faults arise. When the occupant of a first-class sleeper complained that he had found his bed damp on joining the train, Stevens questioned the conductor without success.

"Suddenly," says Stevens, "the conductor remembered that another passenger had gone into that berth by mistake. It had been a rainy night, and we decided he had placed his wet bag on the bed before being moved to his own berth."

Stevens could do nothing about this complaint, which should have been made to the conductor at the time. Sometimes, however, he can take action.

After a large London dog show, passengers on a north-bound train complained that dogs and their owners were annoying everybody else. After the next show Stevens himself inspected the north-bound trains. "I found that some compartments were monopolized by a single passenger with two big dogs he says.

He reported that it was impracticable to separate the dogs from their owners, and suggested instead that the railway should provide special accommodation.

"After a recent Birmingham dog show," he says, "we put on two special carriages for dogs and their owners only."

A regular complaint is that luggage is carried beyond its destination. Often the cause is faulty labelling, or there is no label at all. At other times the correct label is over-shadowed by labels from expensive foreign hotels.

One of his jobs is to ride with senior executives when they travel in their drawing-room style saloon. He also inspects compartments reserved for V.I.P.s.

Although another department is responsible for Royal trains, Stevens becomes involved when the Queen Mother, Princess Margaret or the Duchess of Kent is travelling. "The Queen Mother likes a saloon owned by the Western Region," he says. "Princess Margaret and the Duchess of Kent prefer one belonging to the Eastern Region."

It is Stevens's job to take a light engine and collect the particular saloon from the appropriate place—Canonbury for the Eastern Region, Kensington for the Western.

A native of Peebles, Andrew Learmouth Stevens joined the Caledonian Railway on August 4, 1919, as a booking clerk. In 1926 he was transferred to Edinburgh, and four years later to London. Since then, he has worked in the Euston Inquiry Bureau, as stationmaster at King's Langley and as a parcels inspector. He became a passenger train inspector in 1951.

In addition to a forty-four hour week, which he works "where and when required," he puts in considerable overtime and spends most Sundays regulating traffic where engineering work is taking place. His basic salary is £630 a year, and he draws an average of 22s. 6d. a week in expenses. He lives with his wife at King's Langley.

Passengers themselves, he believes, are responsible for many travelling snags. Apart from littering carriages, putting their feet on seats and smoking in non-smokers, they sometimes make trains late by arguing with ticket-collectors. Also they may be slow in boarding, or pull the communication cord without sufficient reason.

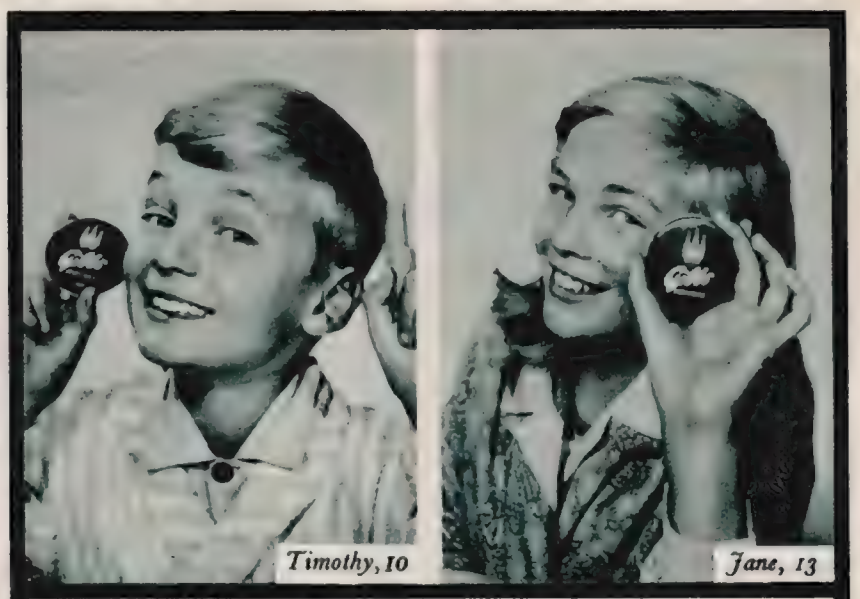
But he freely admits that some snags are caused by human failings of the railway staff. Watching the departure platforms from the Euston office one morning, he was horrified to find that the four carriages that formed the Colne portion of the 9.45 were missing. The man responsible for marshalling the train had simply forgotten to attach them.

THE END

YOUTH—I

Young men are apt to think themselves wise enough, as drunken men are apt to think themselves sober enough.

Lord Chesterfield



"More families use GIBBS than any toothpaste"

LIKE THE RICHARD MURDOCHS

RICHARD MURDOCH, famous radio star, and eldest daughter Belinda, 14—notice a family resemblance? Notice something *all* the Murdochs have in common? Bright smiles, and healthy white teeth—thanks to Gibbs! *Buy Gibbs today with or without chlorophyll.*

6D/B/1304/6

Holidays Ahead

Going to chance your arm or will you make sure now of top performance from a trouble-free engine?

"Last year," says Tom Vaughan of Chelsea, "I took my car abroad for the very first time." And if you aren't very careful he'll tell you exactly how he spent every minute of a wonderful holiday. What's well worth hearing though is the bit about his car. "The engine never even looked at trouble—sweet as a little bird—and those mountains were something to take, I can tell you. Didn't do anything special either. I put it all down to the oil I'd been using—and to regular servicing. It's kept that car as good as the day I bought it in 1952—good and lively and reliable. "I'd read about Shell X-100 and it seemed good sense that engine oils which were good enough before the war, weren't up to scratch for our modern, high-performance engines. So I gave this new one a try—and now I never stop patting myself on the back."

Trouble-free!

"The engine had an overhaul at 45,000 just before I went to Italy: it was as clean as a new pin and wear was next to nothing. So I set out with a very light heart, I can tell you—and came home even more pleased."

One of 700,000

Mr. Vaughan's is no isolated case. More than 700,000 motorists now use Shell X-100 Motor Oil in Britain (and many, many more abroad). The best test — their own experience — has proved that this new kind of oil keeps their engines young and lively twice as long. New additives in Shell X-100 keep dirt from clogging oilways and

fouling piston rings, valves and gears. They also increase the "cling" of the oil so that it doesn't drain off bearing surfaces. And above all they fight the acid action caused by a combination of water and acid vapours produced during running. This acid action is now known to be responsible for up to 90 per cent of engine wear.

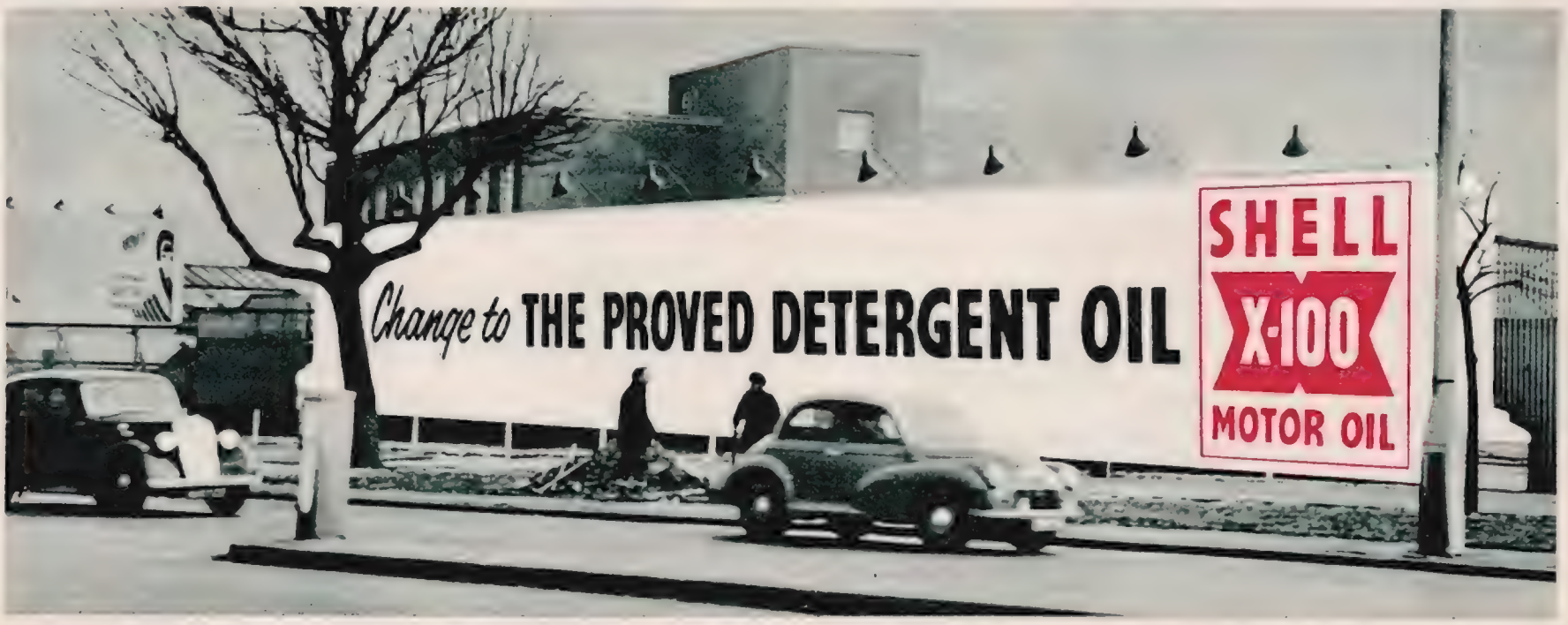
Where trouble starts

British weather is a car's worst enemy. Short runs and cold running give acid action its head and let it take thousands of miles off engine life. Here starts the damage that will perhaps come to crisis at the height of your holiday, spoiling your enjoyment and emptying your wallet. Go now to a garage with a Shellubrication Bay. Have your car greased and thoroughly checked, not forgetting the gear-box and back axle, and have **the engine filled with Shell X-100, the proved detergent motor oil.** It is available in all the following grades: 20/20W, 30, 40, 50 and multigrade, 10W/30.

A view takes the eye: a car takes punishment. Gradients like these search out weak spots in a car. Heat and hard work can play havoc with an engine, unless the oil you use gives the right protection. Shell X-100 was designed to do this. Shell X-100 gives protection.

Lovely and warm. It's good to get away—and good to get home without trouble. That's one good argument for Shell X-100. Another is the fact that wherever you go on the Continent, you can still buy this modern oil. Better motoring is now international.

Cool green fields of home. For the motorist in search of beauty, Britain too, offers great rewards. But here again it's your car that bears the brunt. So go to your Shellubrication station *now*. Have them fill your engine with Shell X-100, the *proved* detergent oil.



overheard in the changing rooms

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"Um, no embarrassing moments, eh?"

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"Smart idea, that. Must see that they're on all my suits in future."

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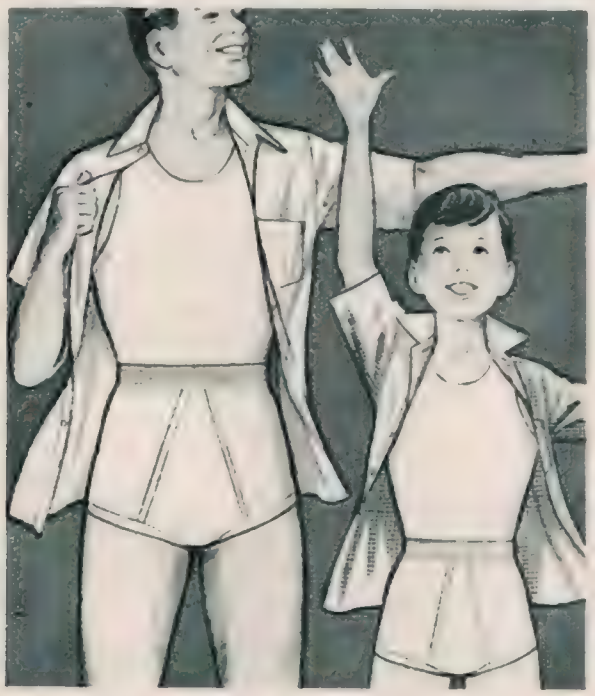

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Thirty-five minutes

Continued from page 9

he retracted the undercarriage. He settled on to the first course, and adjusted the throttle until the air speed indicator was steady on 380 knots. He glanced at his watch, then at his folded map, then at the ground, streaking close below, then at his instruments.

He wondered if Christopher was still alive.

He pulled the Vampire up over a line of trees, and dropped down into the valley beyond, hugging the ground as much as he could.

It was not a comfortable ride. Air disturbances and upcurrents from woods and small hills formed almost solid obstacles through which the Vampire crashed its way in a series of shuddering bumps. A railway junction flashed below in a blur of lines and signals, and a glance at his wrist watch showed him that he was five seconds late. He raised the speed to four hundred knots, held it for ten seconds, and then dropped back, but only to 385 knots.

Eight and a half minutes after take off he came to the first turning point, a small railway repair works. Opening the throttle, he pulled up sharply to a thousand feet, switched on his gunsight and, in a sharp diving turn, swept down into an attack on the engine sheds. As the illuminated gunsight crept on to the sheds, he pressed the "fire" button, and the camera-gun began to take pictures of his sight and the target.

He wondered if Christopher was still alive. With a shock of horror, he heard something inside him say that it would be Elizabeth's fault if he weren't.

Then, suddenly, he realized that he was going to fly the Vampire straight into the ground. Swiftly, he pulled the stick back, and the horizon dipped, and then curved beneath him. His body was sharply, uncomfortably heavy on the pull-out. A grey mist formed before his eyes, followed by blackness. Blind, but still conscious, he guided the jet in what he hoped was a climb, and waited for the blackout to clear.

It was only a second or two, but it seemed like all eternity. Then his vision returned, and he found, thankfully, that he was in an ascending spiral. Belatedly, his heart began to pound, and perspiration ran down his face.

"I'll have to watch it," he said.

When he got to the rendezvous he was late, and there were no other aircraft in sight. He swung on to the homeward course. He was tempted to call control on the radio and see if a phone call had come in about Christopher. Yet that was silly. He'd only been up about twenty minutes, and he'd be landing in another ten.

Nevertheless, he increased speed, and dismissed the thought of the extra fuel consumption from his mind. Now he wanted to get back as fast as possible. Something might have happened.

Then the airfield appeared. Johnny began his approach, wishing that he could get down faster. Thrusting the Vampire over, he turned on to the down-wind leg, and made his checks. Air brakes. Brake pressure. Flaps.

Perhaps the hospital had telephoned. But what about the other thing? What was he doing to Elizabeth?

As he made his last turn, he called Control. "Alfa Quebec, turning finals," he reported. Then he added hastily: "Three greens."

"Clear to land, Alfa Quebec."

THE runway came up towards him, broad and long, and he checked the descent. Slowly the Vampire sank, slowly, slowly . . . suddenly, Johnny started, rigid, and very frightened.

The nose of the aircraft was too low. Already the wheels should have touched the runway.

In one fleeting fraction of time, Johnny realized what had happened, and simultaneously considered the alternatives. He had made the prize error that all pilots were wary of. He had forgotten to lower the undercarriage.

He could cut the throttle completely, and make a belly landing. But he was travelling fast, and sitting in front of a hot engine, and some inflammable fuel. . . . Or he could open the throttle, and try to go round again. But jet engines were slow to pick up, and the aircraft might already have lost too much flying speed. In which case, he would stall into the ground.

A fraction of a second later Johnny made his decision, and started to open the throttle, forcing himself to do it gently. Not too fast. That would be

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6H/104

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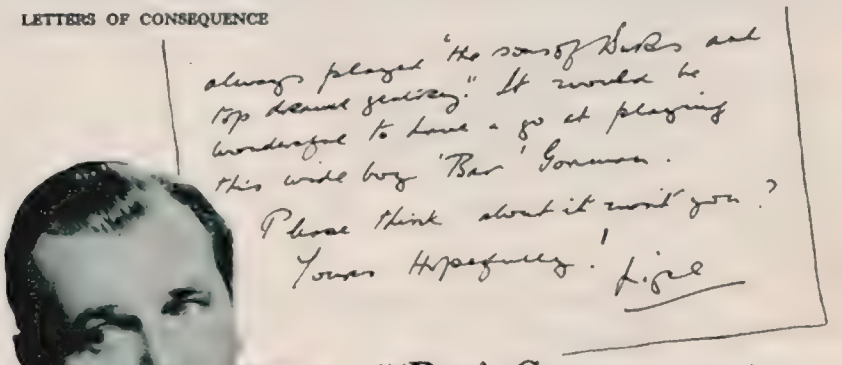
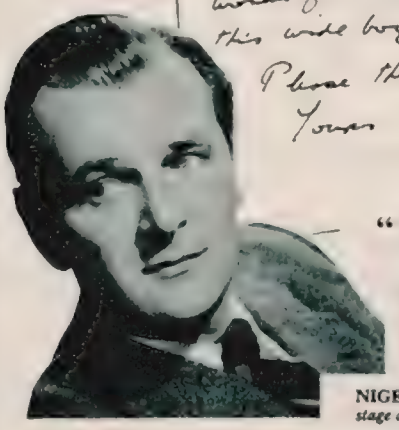
LETTERS OF CONSEQUENCE


always played 'the son of Burke and
Hp learnt secretly.' It would be
wonderful to have a go at playing
this wide boy 'Bar' Gorman.
Please think about it would you?
Yours Hopefully. Nigel



"'Bar' Gorman put my name in lights"

says NIGEL PATRICK

NIGEL PATRICK, *celebrated star of stage and screen, chooses Basildon Bond*

"AFTER THE WAR," says Nigel Patrick, "special one-night shows were put on to re-introduce demobilized actors and actresses to forgetful managements.

"In 1947, I'd been offered a part in *Noose*—but another part, Cockney 'Bar' Gorman, appealed to me more. Till then I'd always played light comedy. I wanted to play something different—and 'Bar' might prove I could do it. I wrote off—none too hopefully—and got the part!"

Noose was to become famous. The play was bought—cast and all—in the second interval (what a third act it must have been!) and went on at the Saville for a six months' run. That letter put the name NIGEL PATRICK up in lights, and it's remained so ever since.

Letters can be so important. Mr. Patrick prefers to write his letters on Basildon Bond. "I like its crisp, smooth surface," he says, "and it makes even my appalling writing look good."

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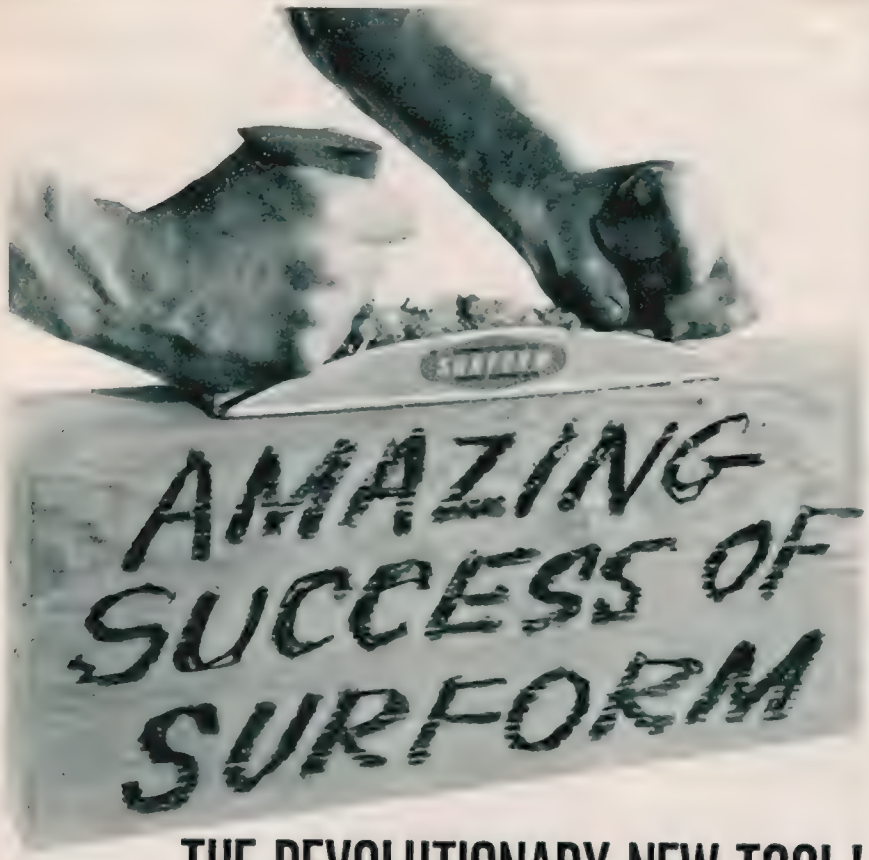

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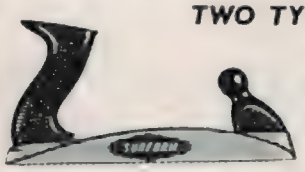

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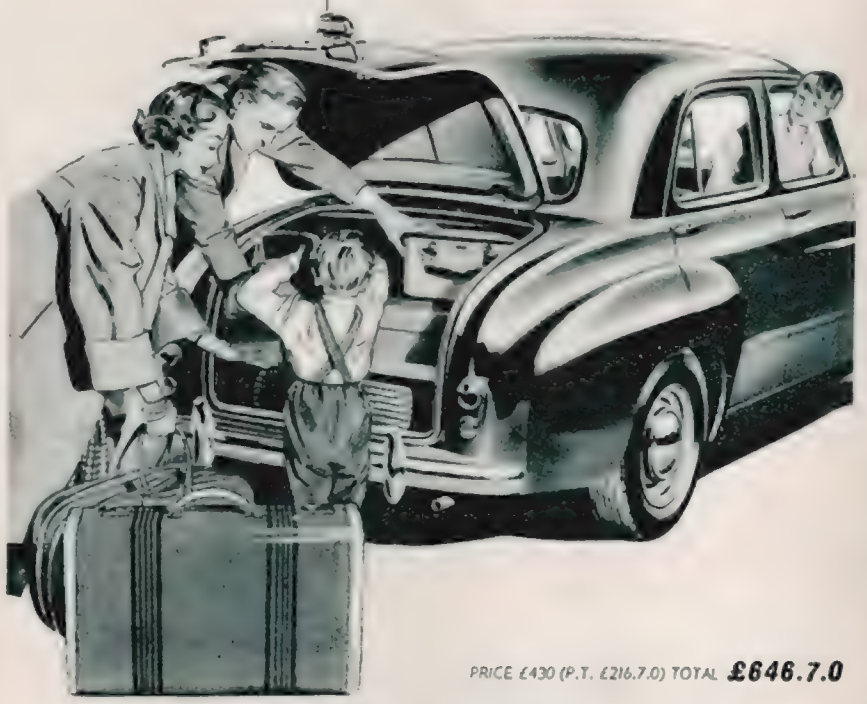

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MOTHER will be more in demand than ever this month, so place an order for your copy now!

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fatal. The Vampire sank a little more, and the sweat poured from his face. His body was strung rigid, waiting. He felt the jar as he scraped the runway, how hard he could not tell. Then slowly, lazily, the Vampire lifted and, at last, with full throttle on, he was able to climb away.

With an unconscious prayer he turned and made another approach. This time, he remembered to check the three green lights in his cockpit which showed that the undercarriage was down. They were on, but they didn't show if any damage had been sustained when he hit the runway.

It was with a curious sense of anti-climax that he landed safely. Shouldering his parachute, he walked to the flight office. His legs were weak and shaking, and he had trouble in walking straight. Death had come very close that morning.

Flight Lieutenant Moss was waiting for him, frowning and grim-faced. He said at once: "That was a damn silly thing to do."

"I know it," Johnny said.

"I suppose you think that air traffic control should have warned you," said Moss.

"No, it was my responsibility. Anyway, I don't suppose they could see me on that approach."

"Let's have the excuses then."

Johnny shrugged helplessly. "There aren't any. I was thinking about something else. It was entirely my fault."

"That's where you're wrong," barked Moss, glaring at him. "It was my damn fault for letting you fly at all. I should have known better."

"I asked to fly."

Moss ignored that. He said: "Do you realize how lucky you are? By all the rules you ought to be littered along the runway in small pieces."

There was no escape from the harsh words. And Moss was still talking. He said: "I want safe pilots, not dead ones. I'll have to report this accident. You'll go up before the Air Officer Commanding. That's all."

Johnny opened the door silently, and went into the outer office. He took off his flying suit, and was about to leave when the sergeant looked up and said: "You haven't signed the Form 700, sir. I'll fill it in if you'll sign it. How long were you up, sir?"

"It was, let me see, thirty-five minutes."

The sergeant wrote the times in, and Johnny signed them.

"You know, sir," said the sergeant, cocking one eyebrow, "there are two kinds of air force pilots. Those who have landed with the undercarriage up—and those who are going to."

Johnny made a wry attempt at a smile. As he did so, the door opened and Moss said in a mild voice: "Can you spare a minute, Johnny?"

Johnny went in and accepted, with some surprise, the cigarette that Moss offered him. Moss said: "Mind you, I withdraw nothing. But now I've let off steam, sit down and listen."

Johnny sat down.

"I hate accidents," Moss said. "They are costly, both in planes and in men's lives. They are due to human error and are therefore avoidable. And yet we're all human. That's the trouble." He looked at Johnny sharply. "What was the cause of your accident?"

"Pilot error!" said Johnny promptly.

"It's a good description. You didn't mean to do any harm, but you made a mistake. You're sorry. You regret it. That won't stop you getting chewed up, but you'll fly again. And what's more, you'll be a better pilot."

Johnny was staring at him blankly. Was he talking about him? Or Elizabeth? "Pilots aren't the only people who make mistakes, you know," said Moss. "Everyone does. But it's not the end of the world."

Was Moss talking to him, or at him? Could he know about Elizabeth? No, that was absurd. Yet everything that he said applied to her.

And then Johnny knew that Moss knew nothing. That he was simply a balanced and kindly man. Johnny also knew that his behaviour to Elizabeth had been thoughtless. No! Call it by its true name. Cruel and heartless.

With the realization came comfort, and the knowledge that nothing had been lost. . . . As long as Christopher was all right.

Moss was still talking. He said: "I landed a Spitfire once with the undercarriage up. The A.O.C. gave me a verbal lashing that I'll never forget. Then he took me to the mess and bought me double whiskies, while he told me about the time he pranged three Sopwith Camels in four days."

There was a pause. Then Johnny said quietly: "Thanks. You've helped me more than you know."

"Good!"

"Do you think I could get on home? There's something I have to tell my wife."

JOHNNY was on the point of leaving the airfield when he was called to the telephone. It was the hospital.

Johnny's mouth was dry. Huskily he said: "Harding speaking."

The sister from the emergency ward was on the line. She said: "Can you come over right away, Mr. Harding?"

Johnny shut his eyes, his skin suddenly cold. He said: "What's happened? Is he . . . ?"

"It's all right. He's out of danger. You can see him. Mrs. Harding is on her way."

Johnny asked Moss if he could borrow his car again. He was already rehearsing what he would say to Elizabeth.

He was nearly at the hospital before he realized that he didn't need to say very much. Just: "Darling. I'm sorry. I love you so much."

That would be enough. Elizabeth would understand. THE END

YOUTH—2

Youth is not a time of life;
it is a state of mind.

Samuel Ullman

"For a smooth shave, boys—try 'Philishave' Rotary Action"

says Eric Barker

Eric Barker explains the 'Philishave' to Naunton Wayne, closely watched by Alec Bedser and Raymond Glendenning

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"So what a good thing I'm here to explain! But, seriously, because the blades *rotate* — at enormous speed — they take off *all* hairs, whatever angle they grow at."

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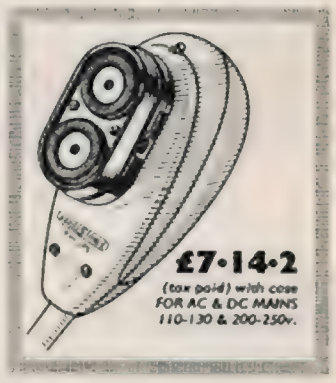

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The silent partner

Continued from page 26

to him instantly. But he made no other move. I went to peer out of the window again, and she came back.

"You've got to go, Mike."

"Not while I can be of help."

"You certainly have been; I could never have got him into bed again. He would have died——"

"And I want to know why he went off as he did last night."

I think she saw what I meant. "He wanted to help you and did help you without considering the cost to himself."

"Aren't I allowed the same luxury in return?"

"*No. . . !* Because you both do it at my expense."

A train went past. The line was some distance away but it caused a tiny vibration of two of the bottles on the table. As it stopped we heard the telephone ringing.

"I'll answer it," she said.

It was raining now. My watch said five minutes to one.

"Mike," said John.

I went quickly to him.

His lips curved when I came into his view. Some of the dead whiteness had gone. "Heard you—mumbling there."

"Sorry. We thought——"

"Stella been . . . telling you . . . my visit to Margot du Caine?"

"Yes."

"Peculiar interview."

"Don't talk now. Lewis is coming."

He made a face. "There was—no moving her, Mike. I could tell by the look in her eyes she knew something. By marrying her, French is in some way covering up. But she pretended—didn't know what I was talking about. I told her Lynn was dead. She said . . . unpardonable interference. Tried to show me the door. Her mother . . . I appealed to her. I think she thought me insane. But the girl did not. The girl did not."

"You did your best."

"Time is it?"

"Plenty of time yet."

"It's—up to you, Mike. You've got to stop it."

I stared at him. There was the sound of a car drawing up outside the cottage. I said: "John, I have to ask you one thing."

He closed his eyes for a couple of seconds and then looked at me.

"Yes?"

"I want to know why you did that yesterday—getting up against all orders, nearly killing yourself."

He gave a faint shrug. "It looked to me—a fair and reasonable expenditure to make."

I said: "You know when the divorce petition came, I asked you, supposing what it said were true, what would you have done—and you said you'd take steps to remove yourself."

"Yes?"

A door banged. I said hastily: "Coming here, I had the idea that perhaps you thought Stella was in love with me—why you should think that, God knows, but you apparently considered it possible on Friday. And that if you thought that, you might—have taken these steps."

I watched him. He considered. "Done it—to kill myself?"

"Yes."

"It would be—roundabout way, wouldn't it?"

"I thought you might have considered it appropriate."

"How?"

"Well, it might go with your ethics. Helping the man whom you thought. . . ."

He smiled and his gaze didn't flicker. "I see you don't—understand me."

"I'm sorry if I don't."

"Or you underrate my liking for you."

"I don't understand *that*."

There were voices downstairs.

"Nor would it—go with my ethics, as you call them."

He paused, listening, and then said quickly, with an effort: "Wouldn't my doing that have the opposite effect of what you think? Wouldn't that way be putting a barrier between you and Stella for ever?"

I stared at him and he stared back at me.

"Yes," I said.

There were footsteps on the stairs. "One is—not always detached, Mike. Don't make the mistake of thinking I am. I hate the misfortune that's come on me. But I don't hate you."

I put my hand on his. "I can't think of anything to say."

He returned the pressure. "Say nothing. But go."

Stella and Dr. Lewis came into the room. I went out and waited downstairs. I knew it was cutting it impossibly fine now. An hour from here to Chelsea, even on a Sunday afternoon. Fairly certainly, so far as the wedding was concerned, I'd lost the trick. But I didn't regret having come.

In about a quarter of an hour Stella came down. She said: "He's having another blood transfusion. Dr. Lewis says he's responded well to the first. I slipped down to tell you to go."

"He'll be all right?"

"As right as he can be. Perhaps two weeks in bed. Then he may get up again. . . ."

I peered out again, at the garden and the rain.

"Now do you feel free?" she said, almost angrily.

"Yes, I feel free."

It was a queer expression of the way I was at present fixed. I kissed her and left. This was the final goodbye and had to be excused.

I got across to the wood without trouble. Fifty yards brought me to the edge of the lane. My car was where I had left it, and I was going to climb over the low wall and go towards it when some sort of sixth sense made me decide to have a look first from the other side.

I ducked back into the wood and approached this time from about a hundred yards ahead. I didn't get very far. In a green lichened gateway of the wood just out of sight of the car, and conveniently placed to step out at the right moment, a policeman was waiting.

I made for the station. Once out of the wood at the eastern corner, you were up against the raw new villas at the edge of the town; and from there it was only two hundred yards. I knew all the back streets of Letherton.

Of course they might be waiting for me, but that was a risk that had to be taken. There wasn't any other way of getting to London now.

There was a train in ten minutes. That was lucky for a Sunday, but it still takes an hour and five minutes from Letherton to King's Cross, and from there I had to get to Chelsea.

It still didn't matter as much as it should have done. Even in practical terms my visit to the cottage hadn't been thrown away. If I hadn't been there John Curtis would have died on the floor.

I didn't think I'd proved anything to anybody by going to see him, not even to myself. But at least I hadn't snapped at the bait that circumstances had shoved in my way. I'd behaved like a fool two or three times in the last few days, but this time at least I hadn't been trying to save myself. Perhaps it showed a twisted outlook, not being able to accept what he'd tried to do for me—but I couldn't on those terms.

The train was five minutes late. I got on it all right and settled into the corner of a third class carriage; there were two other men in the carriage; one in a blue mac nodded to me; doors slammed and the dirty, smoke-grey engine stammered on the greasy lines.

The man in the mac said something about the weather, and, finding he was speaking to me, I agreed, then they went on talking between themselves. They were going to some sort of a meeting, and the other chap, who was in black, was going for the first time.

The train was late. It was nearly three when we stopped at New Barnet, and from there on into a darkening city with the sky yellow and a heavy downpour settling in, the train crept forward as if scared of being checked at every signal. As we slid along the platform of King's Cross I opened the door of the carriage; a porter's face, stared, passing. The man in the blue raincoat said: "You'll get wet, sir, with no hat or coat. It's raining. Like to borrow my umbrella?"

I stared at him.

He said: "It's got my name and address inside."

"Thanks. Thank you . . . no, I haven't far to go."

I got out quickly and made down the

Your garden and mine

by PERCY THROWER

WHEN spraying fruit trees it is often difficult to tell whether the whole tree has been covered, or even if part of it is being sprayed twice. By adding whitewash to the spray it is easy to see when the spraying is complete. — *K. E. Macready, Sylvan Way, Sea Mills, Bristol.*

Before sowing hard seeds such as lupins I find that it helps them to germinate if they are first placed on a sheet of emery cloth and gently rubbed under the palm of the hand.—*S. P. Carter, Springfield Road, Wantage, Berkshire.*

PERCY THROWER says: It is particularly difficult to tell when all of a tree has been sprayed if the work is done in a drying wind. Mixing lime or whitening is a good idea, but I think it would perhaps be better to add D.D.T. This would have the same purpose and would make the spray more effective.

Mr. Carter's is an excellent suggestion. Seeds with a hard coating are sometimes irregular in germination, some seedlings coming up weeks after the others. With larger seeds it is often the practice to nick the outer coating to allow moisture to penetrate more quickly. By rubbing with emery cloth there is no doubt that germination would be more even.

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YOUTH—3

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Logan Pearsall Smith

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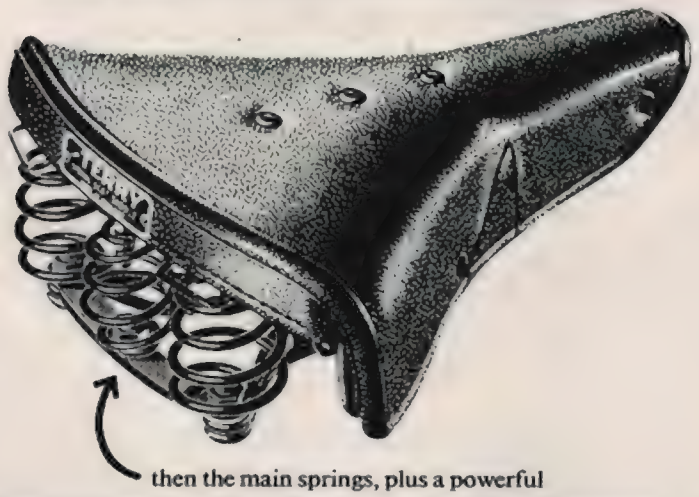

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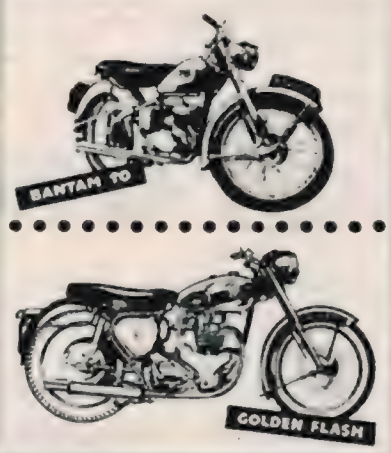

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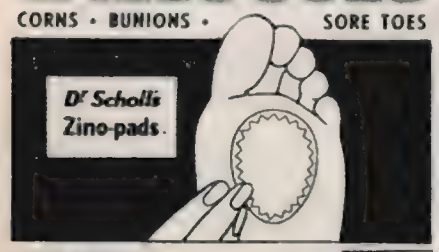

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"Can't you find something a little more exciting? I'm getting sleepy"

platform, gave my ticket; no taxi waiting but I caught one in Euston Road. It was twenty past three. There might have been some delay.

"St. James's Church in Chelsea."

While we were on the way I took out once more the invitation to the wedding. The reception afterwards was at the Royal Hotel, which was in King's Road. Where the couple were spending the night I didn't know; he'd said they were to stay in London.

The afternoon traffic was just beginning, but the heavy rain kept people off the streets. Queues outside cinemas, and in Hyde Park a few tub-thumpers persevered to a cluster of hardy listeners. We took the route down Grosvenor Place and through Chapel Street. It was ten to four.

As we turned into Eaton Place there were no cars waiting and I knew it was all over. The taxi stopped outside the church and I got out. Bits of sodden confetti lay trampled in the rain. The church was dark and empty except for an old woman sitting in a pew in the lady chapel. A notice-board said that evensong was at six. I walked up as far as the altar and back. There was a nice show of flowers.

I went out to the taxi again and stood for a few seconds. A lunatic interruption at the wedding might have had some result. Nothing could come from breaking into the wedding luncheon. Nothing really could help now at all.

"If I was you, mate, I should get back in. You'll be drier there."

I said: "Drive me to a telephone box, will you?"

We purred round a couple of streets and into Belgrave Square. On the way I thought out a list of the ten best hotels.

I borrowed some pennies from the driver and began. When the first one answered I asked to speak to Mr. Raymond French. After a pause the receptionist said: "I'm sorry, sir, there's no one of that name staying in the hotel." I tried five and got the same answer from each. At the sixth there was a longer pause, then the girl said: "I'm sorry, there's no reply from the suite. If you'd care to wait I'll have him paged." I said: "No thank you," and rang off.

It was an hotel overlooking Hyde Park. I got back in the taxi and told the taximan to drive me there. I could wait. There was nothing more to lose now and I could wait.

I went into the tea lounge of the hotel, which was convenient for seeing people coming in and out of the revolving doors; and being Sunday it was quiet. After a while I began to feel dizzy and light-headed so I ordered tea. A few well-dressed people were about now, talking in brittle, polished, crackly voices, but I didn't take my eyes off the doors. It was now a quarter to five. The police would be getting anxious about Mr. Michael Henry Granville, the top-rank radar expert, who might be able to help them in their inquiries. . . . Perhaps Mr. Michael Henry Granville was on the run.

I paid my bill and went over to the counter for some cigarettes. I'd not had any real desire to smoke for some hours, but one had to have something to do.

"Who are those for?" said a black-coated employee beside me. "Four-two-six. Name of French. Take this up with you, will you? Give it to Ferguson of room service. Same floor."

"O.K."

I'd bought my cigarettes and paid for them before the words properly sank in. It had been a page boy who had answered the man, and he was walking away now with a box of orchids in his hands.

The page boy got into the lift. I stood and watched the doors close. A cigarette was unlit in my hand. I walked across to the lift on the opposite side of the foyer.

"Four-two-six," I said to the attendant.

We went imperceptibly up. The attendant flashed his lighter for me but I shook my head. As the door slid open I said: "Which way is it from here? I usually go up on the opposite side."

"Turn to your right, sir, and then left at the end of the passage."

I followed the directions. In the third passage a door was open. As I got near it the page boy was just coming out.

I said: "Oh, have you brought something for me?"

He smiled. "Yes sir. Or I think perhaps it's for madam."

"Good. Thank you." I gave him half a crown.

I went in and the door closed behind me. Then I had time and breath to light the cigarette. . . .

A drawing-room with french windows and a balcony, a lavender blue bedroom, a bathroom leading off. The orchids said: "To my darling Margaret from her adoring Ray." It was like an obituary notice.

Not much personal in the bedroom except one suitcase marked already with the trophies of travel: *Hotel Splendide, Deauville; Hotel du Parc, Bruxelles.* On the bureau were a half dozen labels neatly printed: *French, S.S. Otrantes, Stateroom Baggage.*

The hotel was very quiet. People went out of London on a summer week-end. The french windows were ajar and I closed them. A freckle of rain

had been falling on the edge of the expensive cinnamon-coloured carpet. With the windows shut it was still quieter. There was a telephone in the drawing-room cunningly disguised in the writing bureau, and another phone by the bed. I went into the bedroom and hesitated and then lifted the phone and asked the hotel operator to get me Letherton 409.

It took a little time to get through. Then a voice said: "Letherton 409."

"Darling," I said. "Stella, darling. . . ."

"Mike, where are you?"

"Never mind. Have the police been again?"

"Yes, a few minutes after you left. Are you in London?"

"Yes. But they got my car."

"So they told me. What about the wedding?"

"It went on. How's John?"

"Sleeping now. But Mike——"

"Don't worry about the wedding. Are the police still there?"

She said: "Oh, no, they left soon after. They left as soon as they knew you'd gone. It was Detective Sergeant Booker. John insisted on seeing him for a moment. Are Ray French and this girl——?"

"What did he say to the police? D'you know?"

"One thing, Mike, I must tell you. It was John who first told the police."

"What? About what?"

"About Lynn being dead and where she was. I didn't know that until they came this afternoon."

I said: "I can't believe it. If he——"

"Well, listen. Apparently what he did was——"

I said: "I'll have to ring off now. I'm sorry. I'll ring you again as soon as I can."

"But Mike——"

I put the phone down. Ray French was standing in the doorway of the bedroom watching me.

Sometimes you wait for an event and when it comes you don't know what to do with it: the moment has suddenly run back on itself, gone unmanageable.

He said: "Don't bother about me, old boy. There's no need to cut it short on my account."

I got up and picked my cigarette out

YOUTH—4

Youth is a wonderful thing; what a crime to waste it on children!

George Bernard Shaw

of the ash-tray. "I'm sorry I couldn't make the wedding."

He shrugged. "These affairs are never passionately interesting, are they, except to the people concerned?" He threw his gloves on the bed, passed a hand over his sleek hair, straightened his jacket with a brief downward tug of the hands behind the pockets.

"It wasn't lack of interest."

"Well, I expect you had your plate pretty full, did you?"

"Full of what?"

His eyes came back from the mirror and went over me. There wasn't much expression on his face. It was like an empty house. "I haven't seen the papers but somebody told me. Dear boy, what's been going on? Is Lynn really dead? I can't tell you how distressed I am."

"She's dead," I said. "I really came along to ask you why you killed her."

It might have been a stone, the question thrown at him like that. There was a flicker of dislike round the corners of his eyes and lips as he turned back into the drawing-room. I followed quickly, thinking he might be going to call some member of the hotel staff, but instead he went across to a table where there was a siphon and a glass.

"How thirsty marriage makes one! I'll phone down for some whisky——"

"Where's Margot?"

"Downstairs." He went to the

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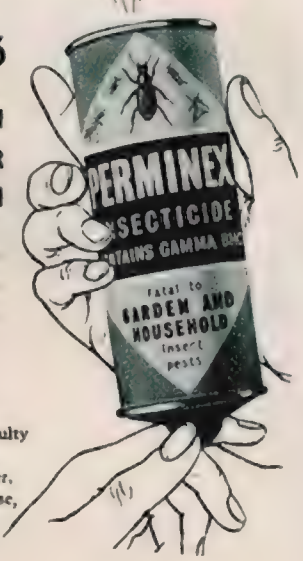

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french windows, opened them, stood frowning out at the day. "I hope this strong wind drops before tomorrow. Margot's not at all a good sailor."

I said: "Doesn't it worry you that I may hang for something you did?"

"It worries me that you may hang," he said over his shoulder. "As your friend, that worries me madly. But if I had done what you say, the alternative would worry me more." He sighed. "Oh, well, that's what life's like! I'll get the whisky."

He moved to go round me into the bedroom, but I got in his way. He smiled at me. It was a pretty queer smile.

"What is this, Mike—a hold-up?"

I said: "I suppose what Lynn was hoping to do was manoeuvre me into a position where I might agree to a divorce and a permanent settlement on her, a larger share of the partnership—not alimony which would stop if she married you. She loved you but she knew you had to be bought."

There was no doubt that his good fellowship was losing its brightness. It was like a badge suddenly tarnished.

"And always supposing that was her aim, would you have done it?" he asked me.

"Done what?"

"Agreed to settle a larger income on her without conditions?"

I screwed out my cigarette, felt the hot tobacco under my fingers. "I suppose you thought you couldn't risk it. Was that it?"

"Always supposing that was the set-up, it would, I admit, have been a dubious point."

I watched him. "And then Margot came along, eh?"

"You tell me." He had moved back into the drawing-room.

I said: "I don't know why you went to see Lynn that last afternoon, and I don't know what part Margot took in it. But I think you'd probably been playing them both along until the last minute, and Lynn, having seen you with Margot and being full of anxiety, decided to bring things to a head by bullying her lawyer into filing a petition at once.

"Probably on the Thursday morning she phoned you to say: 'Darling, I'm leaving Mike tonight and coming to the flat; can you meet me there?' That sort of thing. And you had the job of telling her you were going to marry Margot after all."

He had taken the carnation out of his buttonhole and was sniffing it. The flower looked faded, and after a minute he crumpled the stem between his manicured, pianist's fingers.

I said: "Surely you didn't take Margot with you, to reason with this—loose woman."

He smiled and said: "Lynn was an exciting woman, and usually you don't find women like her with a high standard of morals. But I really believe she'd been faithful to you until I came along. After that there was never anyone else in it at all."

For the first time there was something in his voice. Some flickering memory had caught fire.

I said: "If you felt that way about her, why did you turn her down?"

"You've already arrived at the answer, my dear Mike. Money! Just money!"

In spite of his care he was talking. There was life after all in the empty house.

"When you're wealthy, old boy, it's easy to live on a lofty moral plane. You are in a well-paid racket. You get thousands of pounds for making repulsive little airborne computors which will enable as yet unweaned babies to be more skilfully and scientifically blinded and scalded to death. My racket is a badly paid one. Except for a dozen at the top we artistic fools who make music may starve to death for all the public or the State cares.

"When I was in my teens, Mike, I used to practise at the piano seven and eight hours a day. I thought I was going to make a baker's dozen of the top twelve. But not so. I can play Beethoven and Schumann and Busoni with such technical expertise that in your profession I should more than get by. In my profession I don't quite get by. So I'm expected to rot in the gutter like an old banana skin."

He bent his head, pulling bits of the flower off and sniffing them before dropping them on the floor. "Not so again!" he said. "I am quite unwilling to rot or to starve. I like the good things of life, just as much as you do. So I've had to scrape the barrel and turn to use a gift for pleasing women. I'll give you a few tips some time."

"I understand a lot but I don't understand why you had to kill her."

He was at last left with only the stalk of the white carnation in his fingers. It was already well broken and he began to nip off bits with his thumb nail.

"My dear man, if you have any suspicions go and confide them to the police. It's perfectly obvious to me that you put her under the coals yourself."

I said: "Were you smiling when you dragged her into the cellar and shovelled coal over her?"

His eyes twitched. "Was that how you did it?"

I said: "Lynn was my wife, Ray. I know now I didn't love her or look after her as I should have done. I shall always blame myself for that. But she didn't deserve to be broken like that, buried. . . . You should have seen her, after three weeks."

"You saw her?"

"I saw her."

He stared at me and licked his lips.

The telephone in the bedroom began to whir. I don't think he had noticed the phone in here because he made a move towards the bedroom door. I got in his way again. "I'll answer it," I said.

"I'm sorry. You won't."

I had turned to go into the bedroom myself but he gripped my arm. We looked at each other. I shoved him away. He leaned back, dropping his hands, but before I could get into the bedroom he had grabbed my other arm, pulled me and himself three or four paces into the drawing-room.

We stopped, breathing hard, hesitating on the edge of words. The phone went on.

He made a move to go round me, but I caught at him and we lurched against the wall, slid along it. Anger suddenly caught at me, and I swung at his smooth clean face. Knuckles on it, pleasure in marking, in damaging.

Suddenly his face changed, twisted, and he came for me with both hands; as I raised mine he kicked violently up at my knee. I lurched away and he followed and caught my flying arm, wrenched at it; I fell across his shoulder and was flung over it five feet across the room.

It was like being knocked out by an iron door. I had just sense and control to lie still, I could just see the hazy light from the window and his shadow standing over me. I thought he was going to kick me again, but the phone which had been silent began again. He went out to it.

I rolled over and got to my knees. Then I began to crawl towards the phone on the writing desk. I got to it but couldn't get up so had to pull it off. Then I lay on the floor with my ear to the receiver.

A cautious voice saying: ". . . fortunate to get you a seat on the 8.45 for Brussels. There happened to be just one seat left, sir."

"That's Sabena?"

"Yes, sir. Leaving Waterloo at seven. Er—do I understand you'll not be occupying your suite tonight?"

THERE was a pause. "I shall not, but —er—my wife . . . she'll be along later, of course. She'll be here. But if you'll make out my account now. . . ."

"Certainly, sir. Shall we send the air ticket up to you?"

"No, I'll collect it. Oh, and—er—will you see that the suite is on no account disturbed—until my wife comes, that is. I shall be leaving some private papers about. . . ."

"Of course, sir. I'll send up instructions at once."

"Thank you." There was a click.

I didn't bother to try to put the phone back. It took all I had to get to my feet.

I got to my feet. I looked round for something handy and saw the soda siphon. I made across to it and picked it up. Ray came out of the bedroom and stood back against the door. His face was like a smart woman's when the make-up is taken off.

He said: "Feeling ill? You pale lily-fingered scientists bending over a bench all day, you've got no guts. You should try being an artist for a few weeks, it would get you in condition."

I didn't say anything. His glance strayed to the dangling telephone. After a pause he said: "Murder's one of the rarer carnal experiences, isn't it. You can't qualify or divide it. And at the time perhaps you don't want to."

The teeth were showing at last. I said: "Why aren't you taking Margot with you?"

He walked over and slammed the telephone back on its rest. "Have you ever seen Lynn in a temper—suddenly white hot, an electric wire short-circuiting. Have you? Has she ever come at you with her nails just like a cat, wanting your eyes out? What did you do in self-defence against the sweet girl? Did you fight Marquess of Queensberry?

"I was in the Commandos, my dear Mike, while you were hatching nasty eggs in your safe little back room. In the Commandos they teach you fascinating technical tricks of another kind. The only thing they don't teach you is that some people's necks break easier than others. Lynn's must have

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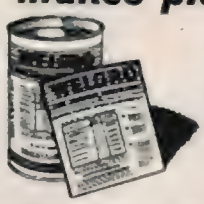

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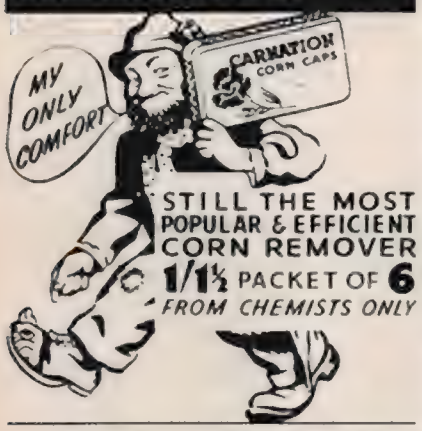

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been very flimsy. I let her go as soon as she dropped her claws."

By moving to the telephone he had halved the distance between us. He said savagely: "It was a hell of a way to hide her, but when it comes to the point you find that the corny place is the only place. I knew the police would look there."

I said: "Why did you come back the following night?"

"I'd left a gramophone catalogue that wasn't due to be published until the following week. What made you come here, now, today? How the hell did you get in here? What's put you on to me again?"

"Hasn't your marriage shut down on all the evidence you hoped it might?"

He wiped the back of his hand across his mouth, which was swelling at the corner. "I'm not married, my dear Mike."

We stared at each other. A clock somewhere was chiming the half hour. He said: "Was it some friend of yours who called in on Margot last night, told her Lynn had been murdered, shook her innocent faith in what I'd told her? Was it?"

"Yes."

"She didn't believe him then, but she rang me after. I pacified her, told her he was a madman. I think she believed. But then the newspapers came today. . . . That settled it. I've just left her after three hours. She must have a week's postponement." He looked at the siphon I held. "She must have it. Well, she'd have been a dull woman to live with, dull after Lynn."

He was leaning now with his hands on the back of a chair. I said: "Then it's really you that's on the run."

"Not yet. But now that you've pushed in . . . I hope your neck is stronger than hers."

I said: "Lynn was my wife."

His eye twitched again. "She wasn't much good, you know, not at heart. But she was good in other ways. She'd no thought for anyone but me. Not a thought in her head or her body. She scratched me with her nails, and her neck broke like chalk in my hands. It broke like chalk, and she was dead—just in ten seconds. I thought she'd fainted till the colour changed, changed while I was still holding her. Her eyes kept opening while I carried her."

He leaped at the chair in front of him and swung with it as I lifted the siphon. They jarred in mid-air and the siphon slid down the wood, hit his fingers. The chair dropped but the siphon was knocked out of my hands. Across the falling stuff I jumped at him, glad now of this; we fell to the floor, rolled over. I knocked his fingers from my throat, got his; he tried to drag himself away, I hung on, glad of it.

Something hit me across the eyes like blindess and fell beside me—the siphon; he thrust himself clear and was on top; at the third try he got his fingers where he wanted; they were slippery, sticky, but they held and tightened.

I plucked at his face and he stretched out of reach. Pressure on my neck stopped the blood. I knew, so far as knowledge was still there, that this last protest was over and with it the expiation. The hangman's noose slackened as I died; like finding the reprieve of eternity. . . .

Ray French was standing over me and the room focused occasionally and he'd swung away, was moving away, three, four steps, while some sort of air passed like whooping cough through my throat. I moved my head an inch and that brought sounds and pain back. Someone was putting a key in the door.

It came open as Ray faced it. A man I knew came in, a middle-aged man dressed like a shop-walker, with a face like a prison gaoler. And there was another man, and behind them someone from the hotel.

Ray said: "Stay where you are."

The man said sombrely: "Look, Mr. French, I'd advise you to do nothing silly." He glanced at me. Then he said, "Hobbs . . ."

The man behind him began to move but Ray said again: "Stay where you are."

No one stirred for a few seconds. Then Sergeant Booker took another step.

"I'll have to ask you to be reasonable, Mr. French. In the first place——"

Ray turned sharply and walked out of the french windows. Booker shouted and leaped after him but it was too late. There was a shadow on the balcony and then no shadow. He might have de-materialized, because there was no other sound, no cry, and we were too high even to hear the fall. . . .

It was dark as I came out into Whitehall, and the rain had cleared at last. I didn't know the time because my watch had stopped at twenty-five to six; the glass was starred, a hand broken. It had become a stop-watch pointing to the time of Ray's suicide.

My head still thumped between the eyes and I walked with a limp. Booker had offered me a car as far as Letherton but I'd said no, I'd stay in London tonight.

I turned up towards Trafalgar Square. They'd booked me a room by phone at the usual hotel and had offered to run me there, but I'd said I'd walk. So I walked.

Booker had said: "Your phone call to Mrs. Curtis just did the trick; we had the line tapped by then; I'd just got back to the Yard when the message came. Lucky for you. . . . It's a bad thing to conceal things from the police, Mr. Granville."

Conceal things from the police. . . . I'd just signed a statement in which nothing was concealed except all the things that counted—such as my hurt from Lynn and my love for Stella and my overriding obligation to. . . .

"You've a good friend in Dr. Curtis. If it hadn't been for him. . . . An inspired guess of his, about French and Miss du Caine. Of course it was more than a guess. When I saw him this afternoon he gave me his reasons. Not proof as we need it, but it has helped us to find the proof."

I passed the Royal United Services Institution and crossed Horse Guards Avenue. Someone stared at the plaster on my forehead, and I stopped at the corner to look for a taxi, because I found walking wasn't in my line after all. But none came so I went on. . . .

While I had been having first-aid treatment Booker had been to see Margot du Caine.

"I had the greatest difficulty in persuading her to talk," he said. "Human nature's a strange thing. She was very distraught, appears now to be blaming herself and blaming her mother that she didn't marry him after all." He paused for a while, brooding. "You see, she loved him."

I said: "So did Lynn. . . ."

"Of course, Miss du Caine had nothing to do with the murder, but she was in French's flat when he came back from visiting your wife late that Thursday afternoon. He'd had an appointment with her at five and hadn't turned up, so she'd gone round to his flat. He came back about six carrying the suitcase with your wife's initials on it, with scratches down his face, and coal dust on his shirt and sleeves.

"It's not surprising, I suppose, that he didn't linger a second longer than he could help at your house after doing what he had done, or that he should want to wait until dusk before planting your wife's suitcase in her London flat. But Miss du Caine's unexpected presence put him on the spot. He told her he'd had a car accident with a coal lorry, he being with your wife in her car.

"The du Caine girl quarrelled with him because he'd promised not to see Mrs. Granville again, but she swallowed his story. No doubt French saw the possibilities and the danger right away. For him it became a race against time whether he could marry Miss du Caine before the body was discovered. To that end he went to every length to try to keep your wife 'alive'. . . ."

I crossed Whitehall and skirted Trafalgar Square. Four buses in line came round the corner, sweeping and speeding like fire engines. A clock was striking; Big Ben; I stopped and counted. Eleven. Later than I thought.

I said to myself, *I'm free, there's no longer any real danger at all.* But it wasn't Booker or Margot du Caine I had to thank; it was John.

I said to myself, *I'm free; the shadow's gone; I'm free, I have to say it over and over again to try to believe it. Because in my heart I know it's not true.*

Or only superficially true. Because all the time this threat of arrest for Lynn's murder had been a sort of façade, behind which the real tension had been mounting and maturing.

I thought, *Lynn is gone but I still owe for Lynn. And if John is not yet gone he has made the unrepayable gesture.*

I limped up the Haymarket. The cinemas had all emptied and the streets were thinning. A taxi cruised by with its sign lit, but now I didn't want it. Just ahead were the electric fireworks of Piccadilly Circus tirelessly exploding their banal advice.

I got to the hotel and signed in and took the key. I'd no baggage but they knew me by now. I went upstairs and lay on the bed and lit a cigarette and watched the smoke. I thought about Stella, and told myself that now I only had to wait. That was what it would boil down to in the end; I couldn't pretend anything else. Nothing at the finish could keep me away from her, not fire or storm or war, and if John now stood between us, and if his memory always would, yet I would take all that and any strings attached to get the person I loved.

But I knew in my bones it wasn't going to be as easy as all that. The gap between her and me was greater than it had been a week ago and it would grow wider yet.

I lay back for a bit and my mind went over all the work I'd put into the last twelve months, seeing the new factory grow out of the grass, planning it, organizing it, the complications and headaches of being half a scientist and half a business man and not quite either. I thought of the survey equipment and the success of last night and what I'd lost in trying to win it. I thought of success generally, how much we sweated for it up every side alley of life, how hard we tried for it and how little it eventually added up to.

And I suddenly knew what I'd got to do. If I wanted to keep any of the things I cared about I'd first got to learn to give them up. A primary law, that; and it operated in different ways at all stages of the game.

I'd got to grow up. I'd got to learn to break with the habit of grabbing at toys. Perhaps few enough people learned it, but for some reason I had to be one of them. Then perhaps later. . . .

But later had to take care of itself. I picked up the phone and gave a Didcot number. After about five minutes a voice said: "Thurston."

I said: "This is Granville. Sorry to phone you so late and at your private number; but there was something I wanted to get settled. D'you think you could get hold of Benson tonight?"

"What? Well. . . . It's a bit late, isn't it? I'll be seeing him first thing in the morning."

". . . Yes, all right. I want you to give him a message. Tell him I'll go to Africa with the survey stuff. Tell him I'm ready to start when he says."

"You've decided to go?" Thurston sounded surprised.

"Yes."

"What about your factory? Will it be able to carry on?"

"I think so."

We talked for a minute or two and then I put the receiver down. I eased the plaster on my forehead and lay staring at the ceiling. I don't often remember feeling more alone. There was a fly on the ceiling walking upside down dogged by a tiny shadow cast by the light. It seemed just then that he probably knew quite as much as I did about the equilibrium of the world.

I picked up the receiver again to telephone my love. . . .

THE END

Winston Graham's novel will be published under the title "The Sleeping Partner" by Hodder and Stoughton on June 28, at 12s. 6d.

Spot the Lawbreaker

Somewhere in this scene, the law is being broken. Can you see where? A barrister gives the answer on page 45

DRAWN BY RONALD LAMPITT

YOUTH—5

For God's sake give me the young man who has brains enough to make a fool of himself.

Robert Louis Stevenson

Linoleum installation by Haskel, Robertson — *Toys by Tri-ang*

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LINOLEUM

Battle in the flames

Continued from page 17

services all over the country as well as its own. Recruits must be at least five feet seven inches tall and have a chest measurement of thirty-six to thirty-eight inches.

They are given eight weeks' basic training in all branches of fire service work. They must learn to run up a fifty-foot ladder in ten seconds and to carry a twelve-stone dummy from a smoke-filled basement while wearing a fifty-six pound breathing apparatus.

The men have to reach a high standard of suitability. "Though we get a fair number of recruits, we lose them all along the line," says Todd. Many do not come up to the medical standards, others fail their examinations, some find that they have no heads for heights, others, crawling in smoke-filled tunnels and cellars, discover that they are claustrophobes.

Accepted men begin at £9 12s. a week and can reach £12 2s. without promotion. They can expect a half-pay pension after twenty-five years. In Birmingham, where there is strong competition from many industries, the brigade is usually undermanned and firemen, working eighty hours a week in twenty-four hour shifts, earn extra money.

Todd has never forgotten one of his first jobs. When the big top and menagerie of a large circus went up in flames he led some of the animals to safety. Then a wooden cage containing eight lions caught fire in front and on top. Maddened with fear and pain the lions ran roaring about the cage. The trainer, Togare, suddenly climbed to the top of the blazing cage to try to reach his animals. Todd was ordered to turn the hose on him and knock him off.

Three times Todd trained the jet on Togare and knocked him off the cage. The fourth time Togare succeeded in dropping inside. None of the lions turned on him and with flames licking round him Togare transferred them to another cage. When they had been moved to safety, Todd saw him sitting among them treating their burns with raw eggs and olive oil.

Todd, who lives with his wife, Cecilia, in a flat at the Central Fire Station, finds there is humour as well as excitement in fire fighting. Once the brigade was called to a chimney fire in a block of flats. The smoke was coming from a large stack, and a fireman was sent to the roof with a jet to find out which chimney was on fire. The volume of smoke made it difficult for him to judge among the several openings in the stack, but he gave the signal to pump and directed the jet into what he thought was the right one.

A few moments later a belligerent little man in shirt sleeves and carpet slippers dashed out of the building covered from head to foot in soot and water, trailing a soaked newspaper and shouting his opinion of firemen and all their relatives.

One day fire broke out at a hardware wholesaler's immediately across the street from the Central Fire Station while a party of V.I.P.s from another Midland town were visiting the station. A demonstration of fire fighting had been promised to them. When the bells rang and the machines turned out the V.I.P.s stood just inside the station watching the men at work.

The tall building "flashed" into a tower of flames and the officer in charge at once made it a ten-pump fire. As more men and pumps arrived every few seconds, one of the visitors turned to an officer and said: "This is a most impressive demonstration you've laid on for us. We are very grateful but you really should not have gone to all this trouble."

The officer patiently explained that it was a real fire and that there were limits to the enthusiasm of even Britain's No. 1 fire brigade. THE END

Zanzabuku

Continued from page 21

abandoned all efforts to get away. Our cameras took films of the whole affair and, I'm happy to say, one of them kept going even after the giraffe was safely in the truck. The giraffe then stretched out its long neck towards Gordon Pollman, Carr Hartley's half-brother, and gently nibbled off his hat. It was just the kind of shot that you always want but usually miss because the cameras have stopped. It also illustrated perfectly that the giraffe is not a vindictive animal and soon settles to captivity.

Among the Africans working at Hartley's place were several Turkanas, from the tribe which lived far to the north, around Lake Rudolf and near the border of the Sudan. They were tall, long-legged, with distinctive lower-lip plugs and white ostrich-feather head-dresses. I became interested in them and featured them in several sequences, knowing that if ever I managed to visit their remote territory I would have a ready link for my film.

The animals' tea party was another unusual sequence taken at Hartley's. I felt sure that pictures of the relatively tame creatures on the farm would appeal to people everywhere, so we had a table set up outside the house where the light was good. Nearby was a bed. We confined the human actors to Dulcy Wedd, Mike and myself.

As Dulcy and I played cards, Mike took a nap on the bed. Our cameras caught shots of a kudu and an eland grazing peacefully in the background, and then Coco the baboon sauntered in. I pretended not to notice as she sneaked up to my chair, reached a paw into my jacket pocket, and stole some sweets.

Next a small zebra wandered up and nudged Dulcy with its nose. Dulcy took a nursing bottle from the table and gave the zebra a drink of milk.

By the time the zebra was satisfied, the baboon was back, this time with her two babies. She took an open bottle of squash and tipped it up to drink. Some of the squash spilled down her front, much to the delight of the babies, who lifted eager lips to catch what they could.

We shooed Coco away and, as I turned back to our card game, Eric the hyena came into the picture. Much as I dislike most hyenas, it did not take Eric long to win over my affections. With a mischievous light in his eye and an almost-human sense of humour, he grabbed my hat and tore away at top speed.

Back at the table, I put a cigarette in my mouth, only to have the eland step in and take it gently from my lips. He chewed it thoughtfully, swallowed it, and gave me a look of thanks before stepping away. Apparently, the cigarette pepped him up, for he walked over to the bed where Mike was napping, and tipped him out. Mike, of course, appeared to be furious.

Later, we took some shots of the three of us having tea with all the animals, during which the cameras cut to two white owls, sitting on a beam above the house door. Normally their eyes would be mere slits, but at the sight of someone they would open wide as if in dismay or surprise. One owl would give this startled look, then turn to his fellow with a tilted head and appear to give small disapproving mutters. Their amusing gestures added considerably to the humour of the sequence.

We had spent a most profitable time in the Hartley area, but there was little to keep us any longer. We were all eager to get to our trucks and set off for wild country—the wilder the better.

After a visit to two remote tribes, I decided to take up the invitation of my friend Ace DuPreez to visit Mara Valley, where he was honorary game warden.

A husky, baldish blond of just under forty, Ace had told me that Mara Valley was quite small but completely wild, and full of all kinds of animals.

"Lions?" I asked.

"Plenty of lions," he said.

"Rhino?"

"Lots of rhinos. There's even a place in the valley that we call Rhino Swamp."

"Antelopes?"

"What species do you want? We have forest roan, impala, wildebeest, eland, Tommies, hartebeest, topi and some others."

"Well, well!" I said, not knowing what to think of all this.

"And in addition there are hippos, buffaloes, zebra, elephants, giraffes, leopards, crocodiles, and of course, hyenas, jackals and wild dogs. For birds we have ostrich, guinea fowl, spurfowl, partridge, quail, ducks and geese. Plus many varieties of snake, all in abundance."

"It sounds like animal heaven, the sort of place I've been looking for."

"Well, there are twenty-nine kinds of animals in an area of thirty square miles. And every kind of terrain and growth, too, with the river running through the middle of it, thick forest, rocky plain, swamps, hills and valleys. Plenty of shelter for animals and for you. Plenty of open areas with good light."

Ace knew animals by living with them. He did not hunt or capture them, except when such actions were necessary in his job as game warden. He lived in Mara Valley with them and knew how they lived their day-to-day lives.

Ace's knowledge inspired such confidence in me that I took many chances that I would have avoided otherwise. There was the day when I saw a large herd of buffalo on the other side of the Mara River, and I wanted to get close for pictures.

The water was deep here and the trucks could not cross, so Ace said that we would have to wade. I glanced hesitantly at a pool of hippos, not one hundred feet from where Ace said we should cross. As we stepped into the water, the nearest hippos stirred, stared and submerged. The water was so muddy that we could not tell whether they headed for us or away. But Ace went steadily ahead, and I kept close behind.

The water came up to our waists, then up to our shoulders, with the current tugging hard at us. Our footing was slippery and none too secure, so we moved slowly. Completely occupied with maintaining our balance, we were at the mercy of any animal that felt like attacking. And we had seen crocodiles in that river the previous day. But we got across safely and shot the buffalo pictures I wanted.

Ace's biggest contribution to our film came during the rhino sequences next day—the sort of thing I had always dreamed of getting. He was driving the jeep with a cameraman, Johnny Coquillon, beside him and the rest of us were following in another wagon, when three or four big rhinos charged out of the bush at the jeep.

Johnny got the charge in his viewfinder, and from the truck we shot the whole scene—rhino charging the jeep, Johnny manning his camera, Ace manoeuvring to evade the charges.

One by one the rhinos gave up the

Spot the Lawbreaker

See page 43

SINCE January 1 this year, it has been an offence for caterers to smoke while serving food. The new Food Hygienic Regulations of 1955 say that "a person who engages in the handling of food shall while so engaged . . . refrain from the use of tobacco." And the maximum penalties are severe, says a barrister-at-law: three months and a £100 fine.

chase, but one fellow was more determined than the rest. Again and again he charged, missing the jeep only by inches.

I could hardly breathe as I watched, because Johnny had absolutely no protection from the big horn that came tearing at him. The jeep was low, putting Johnny at just the right height for a horn thrust, and it had no sides to deflect or diminish a blow.

Finally, the rhino tipped the jeep over, and Ace and Johnny tumbled out. We closed in on the furious beast, which was busy poking holes in the jeep and one rear tyre. He pulled away, followed us, and made a charge. Then he went back to charge the jeep again.

I got out of our wagon and approached on foot to get some better pictures. I was about forty feet away when he saw me. He did not hesitate, but lowered his head and raced for me, puffing with that sound which has been described, accurately, as like a steam locomotive. I ran for all I was worth, slipped once, scrambled to my feet, and leaped into the truck a few feet ahead of the rhino.

We picked up Johnny and Ace, caught our breath, and congratulated each other on the pictures we had taken. . . .

During our stay in the Mara Valley I saw something which would have made a magnificent and humorous sequence for my film, had it been possible to get shots of it.

A swift and graceful impala was taunting a lioness that had some cubs. The lioness was hungry herself and wanted food for her babies, but she did not want to stray too far. In most circumstances she might have found the father or another lioness to baby-sit for her, but no helper was near.

The impala obviously knew it, and danced gaily up towards the lioness, which crept forward, tail beginning to twitch. At the last moment before the spring, the impala darted away, looking back as if laughing at the lioness.

Then the impala returned, circling closer and closer to entice the lioness out of the bush and into another futile charge. Finally the little antelope moved between the lioness and the edge of a donga. This time, the lioness felt she had her meal for sure.

Confidently, she began her charge, but the impala turned, fled gracefully down the steep bank, swam swiftly over the stream, clambered up the other side, quite near to us. There, the impala stood, staring insolently back. With a twitch of the little tail and a kick of the heels, the lovely creature very plainly cocked a snook at the lioness, and ambled away happily.

Ace DuPreez, who convinced me on my 1954-55 African trip that he not only knows lions but most animals thoroughly, insists that no one should be afraid of a lion. "If you come upon one unexpectedly," he advises, "remember that the lion wants to avoid trouble as much as you do. Give him a chance to retreat gracefully and with dignity, and he'll probably take it."

HERE is the universal refrain of everyone who really knows lions. But a lion's reactions are unpredictable, too. Allan Tarlton, noted white hunter and expert on snakes, who has killed more than a hundred and fifty lions, was once hunting guinea fowl with a .22 rifle. Walking through the long grass he almost stepped on a lioness suckling two newborn cubs.

Tarlton saw the blazing ferocity in her eyes, the twitch of her tail—and he thought he was a dead man. But the lioness did not spring. She stared, and Tarlton stared. When nothing happened the fire died in the eyes of the lioness, and she relaxed. Tarlton moved slowly to one side and walked away.

While lions may be impressed by the presence of men, leopards clearly are not. They are vindictive, bloodthirsty, swift and cunning—a real challenge to hunters with cameras or guns.

Vivid testimony to this was given to me on my last trip by Edgar de Bono, a white hunter. For a time he was interested in night hunting—for what reason I cannot imagine except that it is more difficult and dangerous.

He decided once, while in good leopard country in Eritrea, to hunt leopards at night. He fixed a flashlight to his rifle so that its beam covered the front sight of the barrel and the target. His gun-bearer was similarly equipped.

De Bono was in thick bush country when he sighted a leopard. He aimed and fired—and was enveloped in darkness as he heard a screech of pain from the leopard. The recoil from the rifle broke the flashlight, and there de Bono stood, listening to the howling and thrashing leopard—which could see quite well in the dark.

He retreated towards his gun-bearer, who suddenly cried: "He's coming!"

De Bono wheeled and fired the second barrel blindly in the dark. He felt a huge form crash down on him. Pinned to the ground by the leopard he expected claws to slash him to ribbons. But nothing happened. There was absolutely no movement from the leopard.

De Bono wriggled out from under the beast, and by that time the gun-bearer was there with his flashlight. The last shot, fired in the dark, had gone through the leopard's brain, killing him in mid air.

Edgar de Bono did no more night hunting after that. . . .

Most early lion-hunters regarded the lion as we now regard the leopard—as a vicious, bloody, vindictive killer that went out looking for trouble. They went to kill lions, not to study them. Their rifles were not as accurate and their bullets were not as powerful as those we use today, so many lions were just wounded at the first shot.

Now everyone knows that there is nothing much more angry and devastating than a wounded lion. The pain infuriates him, his pride is wounded as deeply as his body. His muscles are suddenly activated to overpowering strength. He can leap twenty or twenty-five feet at one bound, and his speed over a short distance is almost incredible.

Most early hunters had such a creature coming for them at one time or another, and concluded that the lion was the most deadly and bloodthirsty beast ever created.

Nowadays nobody builds a wall around his camp or keeps fires going. I have heard lions padding round my tent at night, sniffing and looking carefully until their curiosity was satisfied, then going quietly away. I admit that I felt a little uneasy, but I don't think that the more experienced professional hunters in the party did.

For the lion pictures on the 1946 trip I spent some time in the wild country west of Narok, in Kenya. With me was the white hunter David Sheldrick, and with him came his friend Mark Williams, and the famous gun bearer Mafuta.

One day we came across a pride of five lions among a cluster of trees. To bring them into the open we killed a wildebeest and left it where we could get good camera shots.

The lions came out almost immediately, and started to feed. I was disappointed at our distance from them, and got out of the truck and approached on foot.

The lions did not pay much attention at first, but began to glance up as I moved towards them, stopping to film them occasionally. When I was about twenty feet away, all the lions looked up at once. Obviously they didn't like my close approach or the whirr of my camera. I did not know if they would continue eating, retreat or charge.

There was nothing I could do but freeze absolutely still. My blood was so chilled that I don't think I could have done anything else. I knew that David and Mafuta had their big guns trained on the lions, ready to shoot. But could they handle five lions? Luckily, five lions rarely charge at once. So I consoled myself that if one of them attacked, most likely a female, my friends would at least be able to handle that.

Suddenly, one of the lions resumed eating. The others decided not to let it have all the feast, and went back to their meal.

I breathed normally again, but my blood coursed through my veins. I had known the thrill of adventure—and captured one of the most exciting shots of my lifetime.

WE got many lion pictures after that. One day we put out bait and induced a lioness to feed in the open. I advanced on foot to within a few yards, and as I was downwind she obviously did not know that I was there.

Suddenly, she looked up and was plainly astonished. I saw then what Allan Tarlton had meant when he spoke of the fire in an angry lion's eyes. There were burning flames in the pair that were fixed on me.

The lioness raised her tail and twitched it angrily twice. This really made me freeze, for I was told that three twitches of the tail was the prelude to a charge. Luckily the third never came. We stared at each other for fifteen seconds that seemed like minutes, and then the angry lady decided to retreat into the bush.

As soon as she was there I retreated hastily. When I reached the truck and could talk again I turned to the cameraman and said: "That must have been the best shot yet of a man and a lion together."

"Oh—I didn't get it," he said. "I was too scared. . . ."

NEXT WEEK: We are charged by fanatical Masai warriors

OPEN TO VIEW

by JAMES LEES-MILNE

Drawn by ROWLAND HILDER

The Marchioness saved a baby's life and lost Powis Castle for her family

IT was the birth of a royal baby that wrested the thirteenth-century Powis Castle in Montgomeryshire, from the Herbert family. The Herberts were staunchly royalist during the Civil War, and the third Lord Powis was subsequently made Earl and then Marquess of Powis. On June 10, 1688, his wife was one of the sixty-three courtiers present in the royal bedroom when James II's Queen was delivered of a child.

Since the King and Queen were ardent Roman Catholics it seemed evident that the baby, a boy, would continue a line of Catholic monarchs. This was more than the country was prepared to swallow. So it was claimed that the baby was really a foundling brought surreptitiously to the Queen's bed in a warming-pan. Within a few months James II was forced to abdicate and flee to France.

Lady Powis had plenty of common sense. When she saw the newly born baby, who was delicate, being dosed with water-gruel, Dr. Goddard's drops and Canary wine, she boldly took action. She engaged a wet-nurse and saved the Royal infant's life.

The grateful parents made her the prince's first governess, and with her husband she joined the Stuarts in their exile.

Powis Castle was confiscated by William III, who supplanted James on the throne. He gave it to his cousin, a Dutchman named Zuylestein, whom he created Earl of Rochford.

Rochford held Powis until his death, but in 1722 George I restored it to the Herberts.

Henrietta Herbert was the last direct Herbert to inherit Powis, which is now owned by the National Trust. Her husband, the son of the celebrated Clive of India and himself a former Governor of Madras, was made Earl of Powis in his own right in 1804. He was a man of great physical vigour, who shocked his servants by gardening in his shirt-sleeves at Powis at six in the morning when over eighty.

How to get there: Powis Castle is on the south edge of Welshpool (W.R.). *Open:* June 1 to September 30: daily (except Tuesdays and Fridays), from 1 till 6; bank holidays, 10.30 till 5.30.

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WHAT ails industry today? Know any snags about buying a house? Is inflation being checked? A thought of yours on some such everyday topic can win you as much as £1,000 cash this week.

First, steady your *Bullets* aim with a look through the latest winners announced below. Then start by choosing one of the twenty-six *Examples* and off you go. Off into the fascinating world of ideas and words, where *Bullets* prizes and gifts increased to value over £1,450 await enterprising readers.

Post your coupon by Monday, June 4. Only ten days later, a telegram may well announce you winner of this week's thrilling, seven-fold First Prize. It *must* be somebody's—why not *yours*?

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THIS WAY TO THE PRIZE-LIST

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

Threat To Britain	Tramp, Tramp, Tramp
The New Army	King Daddy
Success's Cake	Not Trying
Young Israel	Tenderly, Lovingly
To Fight Inflation	Showing Her Teeth
He Bought A House And	One Mad Rush
Dashed Our Hopes	Caviar And Vodka
In Diplomacy's Jungle	Amateur Farmer
Spending Too Much	Made A Big Hole
Ailing Industry	Nasty Bit Of Work

Incomplete "Examples"—see instructions

What Happened To..... Before It .....
Shows Somebody..... Hard On The.....
Suspicion Of..... Don't Look ....., But

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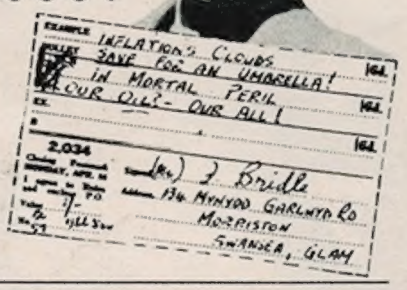

FIRST ever cash prize for Mr. F. Bridle (134 Mynydd Garlwyd Road, Morriston) was his recent £500 for the *Bullet* on coupon reproduced here: IN MORTAL PERIL — OUR OIL? OUR ALL! Your coupon below can win a huge 7-in-1 prize or £1,000 cash.

CHIEF WINNERS—"BULLETS" No. 2,036

FIRST PRIZE, £500 plus Triple Holiday Award: R. Robinson, 91 Victoria Road, Saltney, Chester:

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£50: J. Cooper, "Ardenlea," Lower Street, Pulborough: SAILOR PHILIP—PLOTTING OCEANS OF—*Green*!

£25: G. Townend, Thedd lethorpe All Saints, Mablethorpe: THE SAME OLD STUFF—INSIDE *Man*, EXPLODING BOMBS!

OTHER AWARDS: £10: J. Dobie, Ormisbank Cottage, Waverley Road, Dalkeith: MAN WHO NEVER MATERIALIZED—HAUNTING MY VANISHED "CASTLES." £9: Mrs. C. Knighton, 33 Wellfield Road, Preston, Lancs: KNOCK AT THE DOOR—OF SPACE, SONIC BANG. £8: Mrs. M. Wood, 10 High Street, Newport Pagnell: FATE STEPPED IN AND—PUT FOOT THROUGH "DREAMBOAT"! £7: H. High, 51 Edilom Road, Crumpsall, Manchester: SHE SLAVES AND SLAVES, BUT—GAILY—IT'S *Her* GALLEY! £6: C. S. Robb, c/o 14 New Road, Tongham, Farnham, Surrey: GAVE WAR A NEW MEANING—ANYWAY, INCOMPREHENSIBLE PHYSICS! £5: G. Cowan, 25 Crosby Road, Newton Heath, Manchester: STREAKING ALONG—"SCATTERING" MY ILLUSIONS, YEARS. £5: H. Cracknell, 192 Lyndhurst Drive, Hornchurch: THE SAME OLD STUFF—TILL IT'S *Sick-bed's* RADIO!

For ten winners of £2 10s., see *"Bullets" Bulletin*. 100 Special Awards and 1,000 "Good Shot" Prizes have also been posted.

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries 6d. per *Bullet*. Make P.O. payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated.
4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in JOHN BULL dated June 30), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, June 16, for early news of *Bullets* No. 2,041 result.)

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